

# Stage Four

## Early Concepts

### About this Stage

### Stage Four Focus:

- **math readiness**
- **reading readiness**
- **other beginning academics**
- **peer interactions**
- **social development**

Stage Four marks another significant turning point in the learner's progress—the learner moves from language foundation to academic readiness. Until now, the content has focused on building a solid language foundation. The Stages philosophy stresses that before a learner can be expected to enter an established academic program, he must have a stable foundation in language. In Stage Four the focus shifts toward more traditional development in both academic and social skills. Whereas the language foundation of the first three Stages followed a sequential pattern of development, academic discovery does not. The skills developed in Stage Four through Stage Seven are interconnected and may develop concurrently as the learner acquires complementary skills.

In Stage Four, the learner applies the language skills that were introduced in earlier Stages to progress toward academic readiness. This means that he begins to lay the foundation for learning to read, write and calculate.

For example, in reading readiness, the learner identifies letters and their sounds. However, he is not yet responsible for actually reading words. In math readiness, he is expected to learn to identify numbers and know their values by counting objects. He builds a vocabulary for understanding math, such as the language for making comparisons (small, medium, large). However, he is not yet expected to calculate or operate with the numbers.

The learner is becoming prepared for higher-level concepts by building the conceptual framework for the full academic program to come. Readiness for academics also means that he discovers the joy of learning new things and begins to build the confidence for more challenging content.

## About the Software



### *Academic Readiness*

Stage Four software focuses on traditional readiness skills, including academic work on letters, sounds, numbers, colors, shapes and patterns.

### *Reading Readiness*

Skills specific to reading readiness include letter recognition, sounds of letters, sequencing, rhyming, retelling stories and matching pictures to their initial letter sound. Because recognizing upper and lower case letters and understanding similarities and differences between letters are critical components of reading readiness, they are goals for a Stage Four learner. For example, several lower case letters are formed with a circle and a stick, but are differentiated by the relative position of the circle and stick to the lines on the paper.

A learner's first step in phonemic awareness is an understanding of the sounds of individual letters. The ability to distinguish sounds within words and match those sounds to the written form ("buh" sound goes with the letter "b") is a traditional readiness skill.

Note that if a program asks a learner to find or recognize a word other than his name, it is not appropriate for use at this Stage. That's reading on a primary level and is addressed later, in Stage Five.

### *Math Readiness*

Recognizing and identifying the numerals 0 through 10 is the building block for understanding place value, and it lays the foundation for learning computation in later Stages. Readiness skills for math include number recognition, counting, one-to-one correspondence, patterns, and the development of specific math vocabulary concepts such as big and little.

If a program asks a learner to operate on numbers, it is not appropriate for use at this Stage. That's arithmetic on a primary level and is addressed later, in Stage Five.

A Stage Four learner needs to master the vocabulary that identifies comparative relationships such as above and below, over and under, right and left. Learning this language will prepare him for more advanced mathematical concepts.

Recognition of colors, shapes and patterns serves as a foundation for the more abstract ideas that will be assessed in later Stages. When a learner is able to recognize these properties or attributes in identifying and creating a pattern, he demonstrates his ability to organize information and understand connections among mathematical topics. Stages learners need additional practice opportunities to develop and solidify these skills. Software is the perfect tool!

Learners need opportunities to develop and experience both divergent and convergent thinking. Divergent thinking allows them to explore a body of information, making observations and gaining confidence as they explore. Convergent thinking allows them to demonstrate their understanding of the information that they have been exploring. Support and encouragement are vital to both types of learning experiences. Because this is a large step forward in both cognitive and language growth, adults guiding the learning process tend to become very excited about the progress toward a more standard curriculum. In reviewing software for content, you must exercise caution to stay true to what is most appropriate for your learner. Remember to look for software with readiness content rather than software with higher academic content.

**Software  
Selection  
Tips**



*At Stage Four, look for software that offers:*

- ✓ an opportunity for the learner to practice academic readiness skills in content areas such as letters, numbers, colors, shapes and patterns
- ✓ both divergent and convergent activities
- ✓ different levels of use to accommodate growing skills
- ✓ a supportive and encouraging environment that does not penalize the learner for an incorrect choice
- ✓ creative and fun activities and games that incorporate academic skills
- ✓ built-in access features for the learner's best input method
- ✓ a virtual, accessible play environment

## Relevant Issues



### *Academic Readiness Encourages Exploration*

A constructive readiness environment places more importance on the opportunity to explore concepts than on the correctness of responses. If a program evaluates learner response, take care that it offers a risk-free, supportive, encouraging learning environment.

For example, if a learner is asked to identify a certain item, letter or number, the software could eliminate distracters as incorrect responses are made. In this way, the learner is permitted to continue exploration, but with a more manageable number of targets. Eventually, the correct response is presented in isolation. After locating the correct item, the learner should be rewarded for finding it, no matter how many tries it took. This helps build self-esteem and confidence. Motivating learning through consistent support helps encourage growth toward the next learning Stage.

### *Social Development and Play*

Child development research points to the need for a good balance between academic study and social development. Both social and academic development work hand-in-hand in Stage Four. It is important to provide opportunities for social interactions and play at this Stage. Many child development specialists believe that if there is a barrier to working in small groups, interacting in fine and gross motor activities, engaging in pretend play, sharing materials or communicating, then there is a potential roadblock for cognitive and further language development.

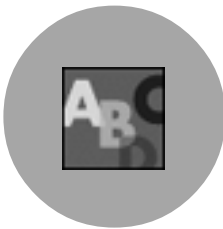
If there is an obstacle to the peer interaction process, create electronic play environments to facilitate such activities. Authoring tools and alternative access devices offer ways to customize and simulate the play opportunities so that learners of varied abilities can play together in facilitated settings. For example, teach learners how to take turns by putting a “my turn” message on a shared message communication device labeled with the appropriate symbol. Or present a choice of manipulatives for an art or cooking activity on a shared custom keyboard overlay.

Computers enable learners to have virtual academic and play environments. While no software program can measure a learner's social development, you can make these observations as the learner uses software that presents virtual play opportunities. For example, some of the software programs recommended for use in Stage Four present accessible play environments. Because the activity is computer-based, adaptive devices permit a physically challenged learner to draw and to manipulate blocks, clay, balloons and other toys in ways that might not be possible without the simulation. This opens up an opportunity for social interactions and academic exploration: Academically, he can count the blocks and stack them in a pile, and socially, he can interact with a partner to build, take turns and play.

### ***The Emotional Side of Learning***

A Stage Four learner is building the foundation for academic achievement. Let him enjoy building this foundation, as he will have plenty of opportunity to apply his skills in later Stages. It's important to remember that there is a world of difference between academic readiness and a more advanced curriculum. For example, we can expect the learner to recognize the letters in his name or know how to count up to ten accurately. However, we don't yet expect him to recognize a word that might be made up of the same letters as his name, or know how to add or subtract. We expect an academic awareness to build, but we don't yet expect the learner to apply the skills in more challenging activities.

## **Extension Activities**



### ***Solidifying the Academic and Social Foundation***

Watch for ways to create accessible play environments that also explore academics. For example, the song "This Old Man" involves rhyming, counting, and number skills. If a learner is unable to sing along, use the software as a vehicle for learners to experience the musical activity and the related learning. Or use a light-tech communication device that gives the learner a way to deliver the repetitive lines of a song or story upon command.

Help learners find opportunities to use a communication device in fun and motivating ways. Single message devices, which speak prerecorded text, can initiate successful communication. For example, use the device to tell a joke, contribute to “Show and Tell,” deliver messages and, as in the example above, participate in activities with repetitive lines in stories or songs. These activities will help the learner develop appropriate timing skills as he uses the device.

Don’t forget fantasy and role playing opportunities. Use software with customization capabilities to allow the learner to be a virtual part of a skit or participate in an interactive make-believe game.

Finally, early literacy foundations are extended during this Stage. Make sure learners have full access to stories and books by using accessible page turners for real books and adaptive devices to interact with electronic books.

## About the Learner



### *Observable Characteristics*

Watch for indications that the learner

- ❖ recognizes colors, shapes, letters and numbers
- ❖ can control the input device to explore accessible software independently
- ❖ understands vocabulary for emerging literacy
- ❖ understands vocabulary for mathematical foundation
- ❖ develops simple social interaction skills with peers, such as taking turns in conversations
- ❖ understands social expectations in various situations and can express common courtesies, such as “please,” “thank you” and “excuse me.”
- ❖ engages with peers in interactive, make-believe play situations
- ❖ shares materials with peers in group activities

### *Competency Goals*

In this Stage the learner interacts with readiness level foundation skills software. He uses both divergent and convergent learning strategies. He begins to develop an identity as both an academic learner and a social peer.

In the early phases of this Stage, what seem like deliberate errors may occur. This is not really an indication of lack of academic progress; it is more an indication that thorough exploration of content includes learning from mistakes as well as successes. This is an important development. Provide supportive feedback for academic content exploration so that growth of these skills is accompanied by development of a positive self-image.

Discovering academics is an exciting time for a learner. Successful social interactions also help learners understand their responsibilities among peers. Both of these experiences lay the foundation for productive risk-taking as academic and social environments become more challenging.

### ***Sample IEP Objectives***

Objectives for learners at this Stage are highly academically oriented. However, social skills are equally important to consider. These objectives offer ways for the computer to facilitate both academic and social growth.

Given *name of program* (software with appropriate skill level and content), the learner will

- ❖ correctly identify a color, shape, number, or letter with 80% accuracy
- ❖ correctly repeat a visual and/or auditory pattern on two out of three attempts
- ❖ retell a story in the correct sequence, documented by adult observation
- ❖ match an initial word sound to the corresponding letter with 80% accuracy
- ❖ build a copy of a puzzle when presented with the parts needed, measured as correct through the observation of software printouts
- ❖ count up to 10 objects and identify the corresponding numeral with 80% accuracy
- ❖ identify everyday spatial relationships such as above/below, over/under, right/left with 80% accuracy
- ❖ demonstrate an understanding of relative size relationships (more/less, big/little) with 80% accuracy

These objectives are measured by the management system provided by the software or by adult observation.

Given *name of program* (accessible play environment) or *name of communication device*, the learner will

- ❖ communicate a desire to engage in a play activity with peers by making a request within five minutes of introduction of choices for play
- ❖ participate in turn-taking through three alternating exchanges in a play activity with one other learner
- ❖ share the access device or play materials with a peer at least three times during a joint play activity
- ❖ respond to a request from another learner for sharing ideas or strategies for playing the game successfully within one minute of the request

These objectives are measured by adult observation.



## Stage Four References

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# An Overview of the Activities

## About the Stage Four Activities

**Stage Four  
lays the  
foundation  
for future  
academic  
learning.**

Stage Four marks a significant turning point in the learner's progress. Until now, the content has focused on building a solid language foundation. The Stages philosophy stresses that before a learner can be expected to enter an established academic program, he must have a stable foundation in language. Now the focus shifts toward more traditional academic and social development.

In Stage Four, the learner uses the language skills that were introduced in earlier Stages to progress toward academic readiness. This means that he begins to lay the foundation for learning to read, write and calculate.

For example, in reading readiness, the learner identifies letters and their sounds and can retell a story in the proper sequence of events. However, he is not yet responsible for actually reading words. In math readiness, he is expected to learn to identify numbers and know their values by counting objects. He builds a vocabulary for understanding math, such as the language for making comparisons (small, medium, large). However, he is not yet expected to calculate or operate with the numbers.

The learner is becoming prepared for higher level concepts by building the conceptual framework for the full academic program to come. Readiness for academics also means that he discovers the joy of learning new things and begins to build the confidence for more challenging content.

The Stage Four activities provide opportunities for the learner to show his understanding of fundamental academic readiness skills. The activities in Stage Four measure his understanding of letter names and sounds, number identification and counting, and colors and shapes.

The Reading Readiness activities measure letter identification and phonemic awareness for all 26 letters of the alphabet, in

**Achieve a  
balance between  
academic study  
and social  
development.**

both upper and lower case. Research shows that these skills lead to word recognition, spelling ability, and reading proficiency.

Color and shape identification activities are a commonly accepted component in a standard preschool curriculum. They teach fundamental skills that help the learner grow toward an academic foundation and that are needed for higher order thinking and abstract reasoning. For example, a learner needs to identify colors and shapes before he can apply them to patterning activities, which are done at a higher level skill than simple identification. The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) considers shape recognition to be a fundamental skill.

The Math Readiness activities measure skills in number recognition, counting, spatial relationships, and pattern development. According to the NCTM, these are the skill areas that foster mathematical insight, reasoning, and problem-solving abilities. Stage Four math activities address skills specified by NCTM standards.

It's important to remember that there is a world of difference between academic readiness and a more advanced curriculum. For example, we can expect the learner to recognize the letters in his name or know how to count up to ten accurately. However, we don't yet expect him to recognize a word that might be made up of the same letters as his name, or know how to add or subtract. We expect an academic awareness to build, but we don't yet expect the learner to apply the skills in more challenging activities. A Stage Four learner is building the foundation for academic achievement. Let him enjoy building this foundation, as he will have plenty of opportunity to apply his skills in later Stages.

Child development research points to the need for a good balance between academic study and social development. Computers enable learners to have virtual academic and play environments, and while no software program can measure a learner's social development, you can make these observations with software that presents virtual play environments. For example, one of the software programs recommended for use in Stage Four presents an accessible early

**Explore  
content,  
then Assess  
understanding.**

environment. Because the activity is computer-based, adaptive devices permit a physically challenged learner to manipulate blocks, clay and balloons in ways that might not be possible without the simulation. This opens up an opportunity for social and academic exploration: academically, he can count the blocks and stack them in a pile, and socially he can interact with a partner to build, take turns and play. (See the Software Comparison Chart following page 65 for a list of Stage Four recommended software.)

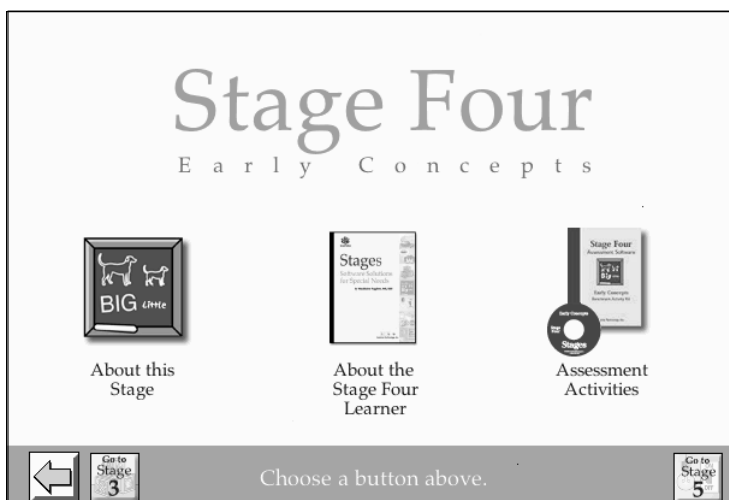
The Stages philosophy embraces opportunities for learners to work in a supportive, risk-free environment. In each type of activity, the learner has a chance to explore the content at his own pace. Use the Explore activities to build learner comfort with practice before administering an assessment and/or to remind the learner about the target skill sets. Then, in the Assess activities, the learner will choose a specific answer that reflects his academic understanding. See page 17 for more information about the Explore and Assess types of activities.

The primary purpose of the assessment activities is to help with software selection. Examine the formal data generated in the Stages reports and the informal data you record on the Observation Form on page 55. Refer to page 45 for a discussion on how to interpret the results of both of these types of assessment. Then turn to the chart following page 65 to examine the features of the software recommended for practice use in developing Stage Four skills. Use the charts to match the focus of the software with the skills that the learner needs to develop.

## Starting Stage Four

Before using the Stage Four activities with a learner, take a few minutes to become familiar with them yourself. When you are ready to use the activities with a learner, go to the section “Presenting the Activities” (page 36).

The main screen presents information about Stage Four and leads you to the Stage Four Activities.



- Click **About this Stage** to learn more about Stage Four.
- Click **About the Stage Four Learner** to learn more about the learner at this Stage. This information is covered in more detail in the section of this guide starting on page 6.
- Click on **Assessment Activities** to start the activities.

## Entering the Learner's Name

When you choose to start the Stage Four assessment activities, you will first be asked to enter the learner's name. This name will be printed on the report that is generated when the activity is completed.

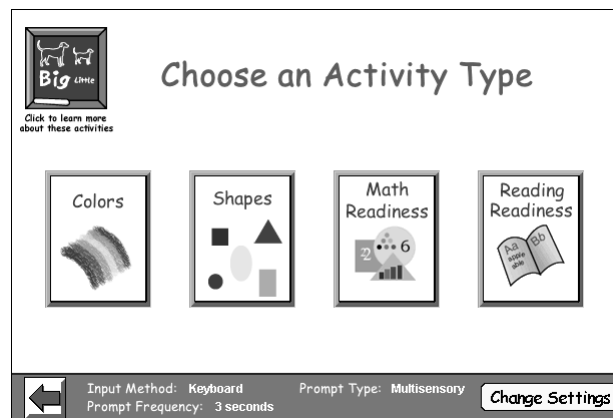
Type the learner's name in the text box in the center of the screen, then click the **Continue** button or press <Return> (Macintosh) or <Enter> (Windows) to go on.

## Setting Preferences

There are several preference settings you can change that affect all the activities. The current settings are displayed at the bottom of the menu screens. Refer to page 30 for explanations of these settings and information on how to change them.



## Choosing an Activity Type



In this screen, you will select a button to choose an activity type. A detailed description of these activities begins on page 20. The following paragraphs describe the purposes of each activity.

### *Colors and Shapes*

In these activities, you are measuring a learner's skill in two typical preschool curriculum areas. Stages targets Colors and Shapes identification because these skills are typically used to build more abstract skills, such as patterning. The Colors activity allows the learner to show his ability to identify six colors (red, orange, yellow, purple, blue and yellow). The Shapes activity allows him to show his ability to identify five shapes (square, triangle, rectangle, circle and oval).

Because the Stages philosophy does not present skill acquisition chronologically, some learners will be older than many readiness learners. For this reason, there are two presentations of Color and Shape activities—one for child learners and one for teen or adult learners.

#### *Math Readiness*

The NCTM states that learning math should be a “sense-making experience” and not a passive exercise of learning rules and procedures. Stages activities demonstrate this concept.

##### *Quantify:*

Recognizing and identifying the numerals from 0 through 10 is important in everyday activities such as locating an address, finding a specific object in a series, and measuring. Learners need to see that written symbols (numerals) must be linked with physical models (objects to count). In the two “Number ID” activities learners identify numerals from 0 through 9 and from 1 to 10 in a random order.

Counting skills are the foundation for learning how to order and compare numbers, and in developing number ideas. In the “Counting” activity a learner shows his ability to count up to 10 using one-to-one correspondence.

##### *Compare:*

In the Compare and Estimate activities the learner demonstrates his understanding of how math helps us every day. These activities reveal his skills at estimating size and amount (such as small/medium/large, big/little, tall/short, more/less and most/fewest), and at determining spatial position of objects (such as above/below, behind/in front, up/down, left/right). In the Explore activities, the same scene is used for more than one concept, so that the learner does not associate a spatial relationship with a particular scene. The same concepts are introduced in two different collections of scenes: Set 1 and Set 2.

##### *Patterns:*

In the Patterns activity the learner views patterns with one and then with two variables. He also completes a pattern, and can create patterns of his own. The evaluator, not the computer, determines whether the pattern is valid.



### *Reading Readiness*

Phonemic awareness, or the understanding of sound-letter representation, is a basic skill learners must master before learning to read. The learner demonstrates his abilities in both the Letter Identification (upper and lower case) and the Letter Sounds activities that make up the Reading Readiness activities. He is prompted to find a letter or the letter that makes a sound from a set of letters. In the Letter Identification activity, letters are grouped by similar shapes.

## **About Divergent and Convergent Activities**



Stage Four activities are organized into Explore and Assess activities. Explore activities allow the learner to investigate a body of information and make observations. Then he demonstrates his understanding of that content in the Assess activities. The Stages philosophy advocates that it is important to provide both climates for learning, allowing the learner a comfortable exposure to the content before demonstrating an understanding of the content.

### ***Explore (Divergent) Activities***

In the Explore activities the learner has consistent opportunities to see multiple presentations of the same word or concept. Divergent activities allow him to select each target on a screen to hear information about it and to see its text label. The report will show how long the learner spent on the activity and how many times he selected each target on the screen.

### ***Assess (Convergent) Activities***

Convergent learning activities allow a learner to demonstrate his understanding of the information he has been exploring. In the Stage Four Assess activities, the learner is asked to choose a specific target from a choice of several.

## Prompts and Feedback

### *Prompts*

In divergent activities, a prompt tells the learner what to do (“Explore the Shapes”). In the convergent activities, it presents the instructions for the learner to follow (“Find the color red”).

You can set a preference to present an auditory prompt (you hear the words, “Find the number five.”), a visual prompt (you see the prompt’s text and picture), or a multisensory prompt (both auditory and visual). The prompt serves as the instruction for the current activity and will recur at the interval selected in the Preferences. In Divergent activities, the prompt interval is doubled to give the learner more uninterrupted time to explore. (See page 30 for information on setting Preferences.)

### *Feedback (Number of Attempts)*

In each convergent activity, the learner has three opportunities to select the target object. When the correct answer is selected at any try, he is rewarded with an animation or text burst. You can set a preference for the type of reward (see page 34).

Feedback for correct responses helps reinforce the skill, and keeps the learner focused on his task. Feedback for incorrect responses takes advantage of an opportunity to teach through content related feedback without punishment. Of course, because this is an assessment, the initial response is counted as incorrect on the report. However, the learner doesn’t need to know this and can still benefit from this deliberately designed constructive feedback environment.

After an incorrect selection, the learner is prompted before he tries again. After two incorrect responses, a few objects are hidden on screens with many objects, giving the learner fewer choices on the next attempt. This strategy is called “successive approximation.” (In some activities, the background is also dimmed to highlight the possible answers.) If the learner does not select the correct target after the third attempt, the correct answer is presented in isolation and identified. (“This color is red.”)

Developmental behavior research shows that successive approximation creates an opportunity to teach. It orients the learner toward the correct response by deliberately removing the distracter items from the screen. This visual guidance, along with verbal feedback, slowly and systematically shapes the learner's behavior to affect his cognitive understanding.

Typical assessment environments don't incorporate learner feedback as a critical consideration. However, the Stages philosophy advocates that feedback be informative, even during assessment. This is consistent with supporting the emotional side of learning. By providing information while giving feedback, we are reinforcing the learner's understanding of the concepts. The data on the onscreen report coupled with the notes you record on the Observation Form will provide you with a complete assessment.

## Choosing Activities



The following sections explain the choices you will make for each type of activity. Click the buttons on the screen to make choices. Use the **Back** button in the lower left corner of the screen to return to the previous selection screen.



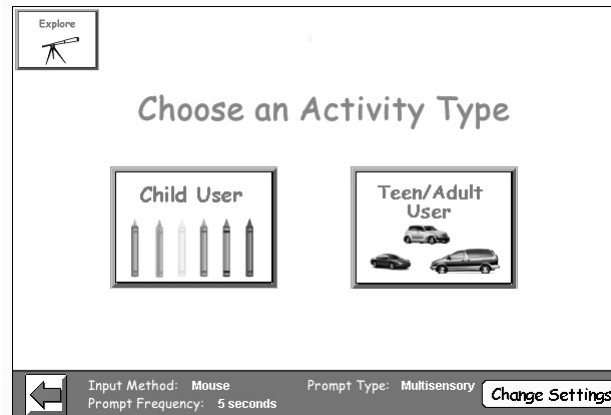
If you wish to leave an activity before the learner completes it, select the **Exit** arrow in the upper right corner of the screen. If the learner is using a switch, press <Esc> to pause scanning in order to click this button. Note that if you exit an activity in this way, you will not be able to include data from it in a graph using Stages Report Wizard.

**Don't skip out of an activity that you want to graph later in Stages Report Wizard.**

At the end of each activity, you can choose a different activity, choose the same type of activity, or go to the report. The report automatically records various aspects of the learner's performance. For details about the reports, see page 41.

## Colors

In the Colors activities the learner demonstrates his familiarity with six colors: red, orange, yellow, green, blue and purple.



You can choose between “Child User” and “Teen/Adult User” for the activities, so that the objects the learner sees are more appropriate to his age. Child user objects are color drawings, while teen/adult user objects are generally photographs.

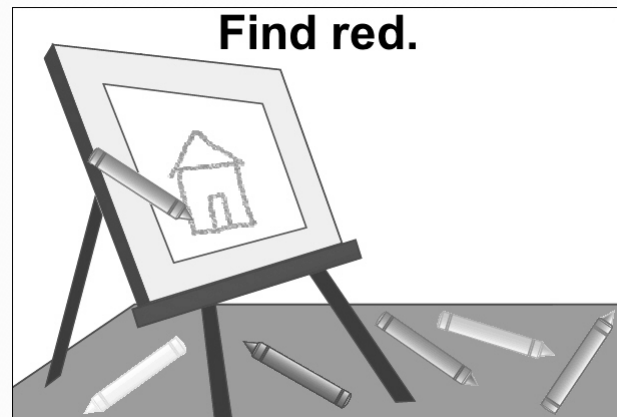
After choosing one of these activities, choose either **Explore** or **Assess** (see page 17).



Each activity type has two activities in a row. In the **Explore** activities, clicking the **Next Scene** button takes you to the second activity. Data for both activities appears on the same report page. Similarly, the first **Assess** activity automatically leads to the second one.

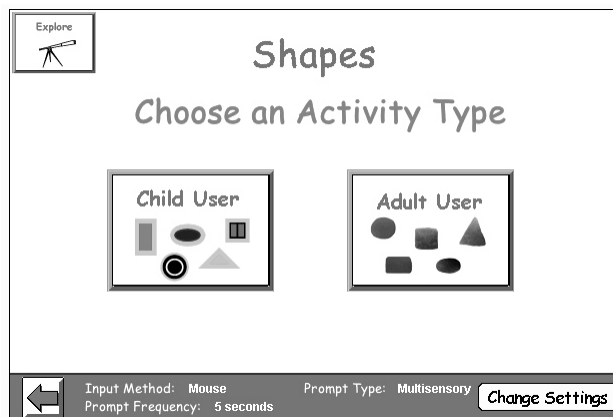
In the **Explore** activities, the child learner selects crayons to hear and see the name of each crayon’s color, and then sees those crayons in a scene (art room). The teen/adult learner makes selections from a group of cars, then from a variety of colorful objects shown in isolation.

The **Assess** activities are also broken down for child and teen/adult learners. The child learner is asked to “Find red,” which he does by selecting the crayon that is that color. The second Child Assess activity asks him to select shoes by color. The teen/adult learner also selects shoes by color in one scene, and then selects jelly beans by color in a second scene.



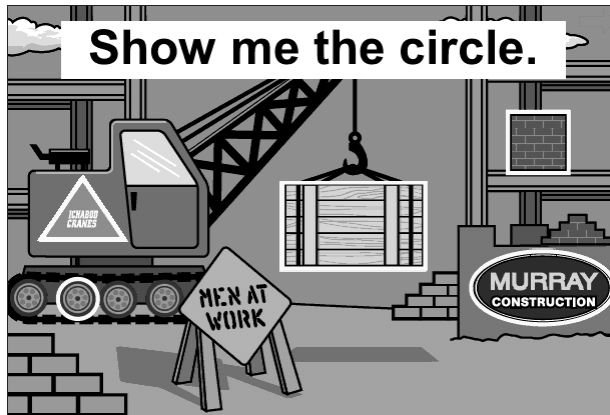
## Shapes

Shapes activities let learners explore circles, squares, triangles, rectangles and ovals. Like the Colors activities, both **Explore** and **Assess** activities in the Shapes section offer Child and Teen/Adult activities.



In the **Explore** activities, the learner examines five shapes in isolation, and then within the context of a scene.

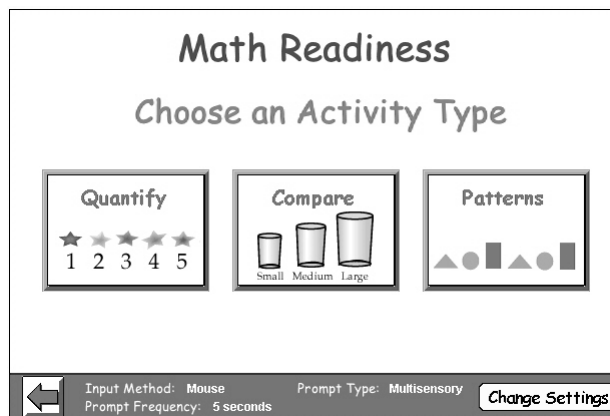
In the **Assess** activities, he is asked to select several shapes within the context of two different scenes (a collection of shapes and a construction site for child learners, and photographs of rocks and a city scene for teen/adult learners).



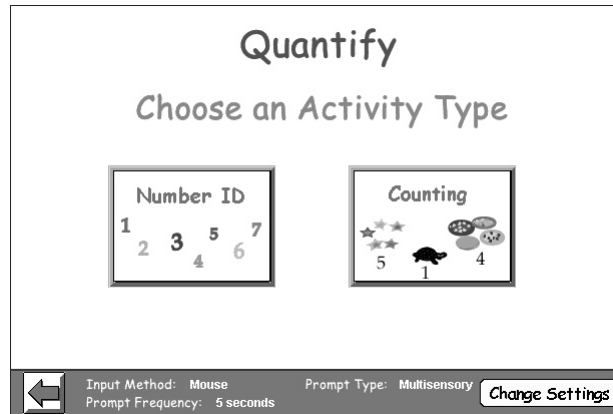
## Math Readiness

### *Quantify*

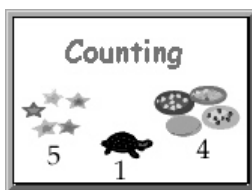
In the Quantify activities, choose between Number ID and Counting activities. In these activities, the learner can select a button or type a number. If the learner is using a keyboard in the activities where the numbers range from 1 to 10, place a small sticker over the 0 (zero) key with the number 10 on it for him to use for that number.



There are two **Explore** activities for **Number ID**. The first features a push button telephone with the numbers 0–9 on the keys. The learner chooses a button and will hear “This number is...” The second activity lets him explore numbers 1–10 displayed as numbers on an elevator. He again chooses a number to hear its description.

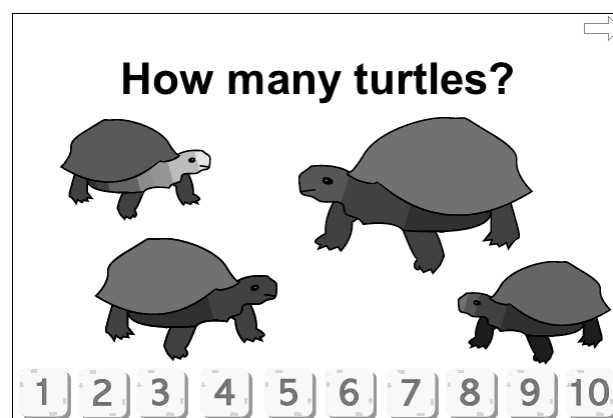


The **Assess** activities in the **Number ID** section use the same scenes (telephone, elevator numbers) to ask learners to “Find the number...” Again, the learner can select a button or type a key.



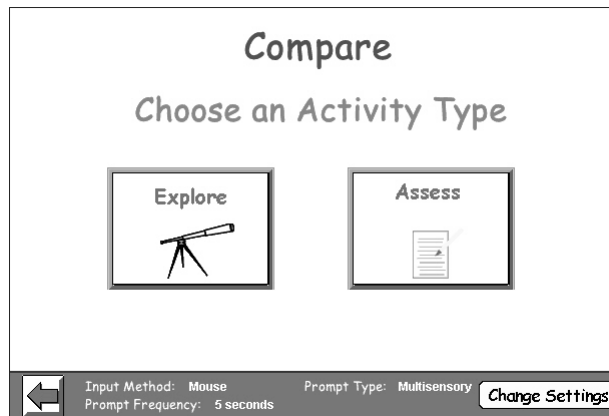
The **Explore** activity for **Counting** features a row of numbers at the bottom of the screen. The learner types a number or selects the button for that number. That number of objects will appear on the screen as they are counted out loud. For example, if the learner selects the number 4, the voice will recite: “One, two, three, four—four people.”

In the **Assess** activity the learner responds to a question such as: “How many turtles?” He selects a number from a row at the bottom of the window that correctly represents the number of objects he sees.

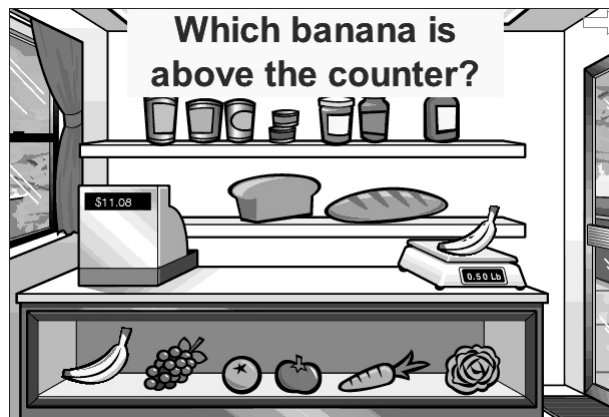


## Compare

In the Compare activities, select **Explore** or **Assess**.



The **Explore** activities consist of two sets of scenes for the learner to explore. Each scene (Bakery, Kitchen, Playground, Farm, and others) includes sets of objects that demonstrate size (small/medium/large, big/little), quantity (most/some/fewest, more/less), and position (up/down, above/below, left/right, in front/behind).

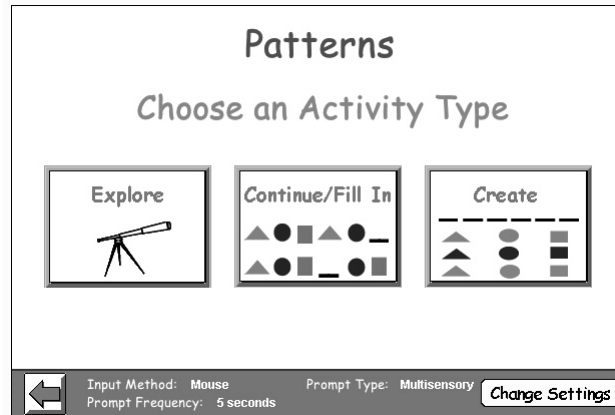


In the **Assess** activities, choose between an Estimating activity and a Spatial Relationships activity. The Estimating activity presents scenes to the learner, and asks him to select objects according to their size (big/small) or quantity (more/less). The Spatial Relationships activity asks him a series of questions about how the objects are positioned in relation to each other, such as "Which banana is above the counter?"

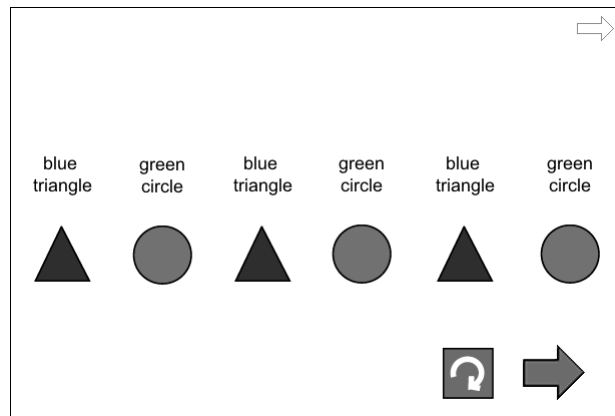


## Patterns

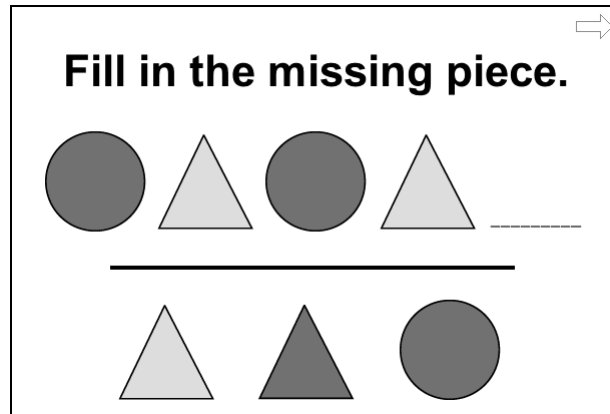
In the Patterns activities choose from three activities.



In the **Explore** activity, the learner watches a pattern develop of colored shapes (red, green, blue and yellow triangles, squares and circles). Shapes are presented one at a time, with an accompanying sound (bell, flourish, twinkle) to help reinforce the pattern. The learner can replay a pattern any number of times before clicking to go on. Use the curved arrow to repeat a pattern.



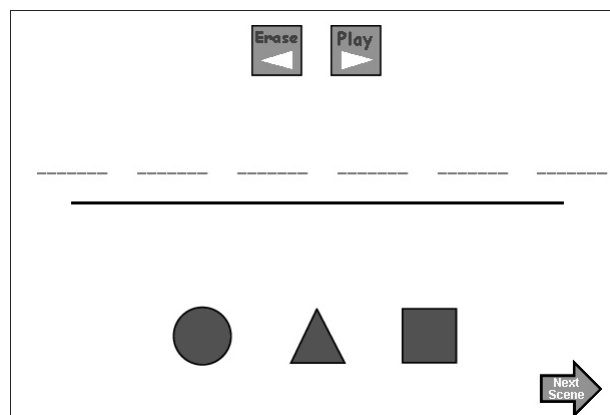
In the **Continue/Fill In** activity, learners see an incomplete pattern of shapes (such as square/triangle, square/triangle). A blank space appears at the end or in the middle of the pattern. Below is a choice of shapes to complete the pattern. Once the learner chooses a shape that fills in or completes the pattern, it moves up to the blank space.



Patterns increase in difficulty to use up to three different colors and three different shapes.

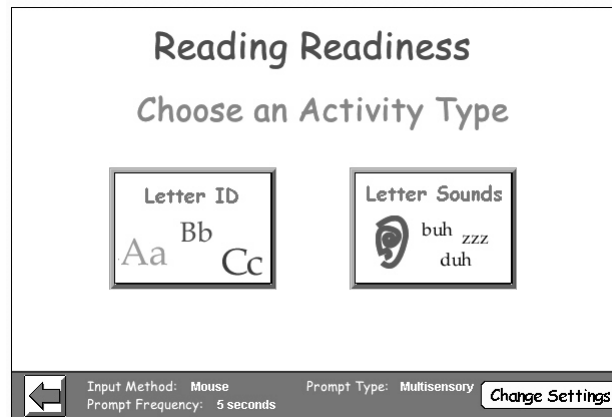
In the **Create** activity, the learner makes his own pattern. Expect that he will want to experiment with the shapes and sounds before he begins to focus on making a true pattern.

After he creates a pattern of shapes, he can select the “Play” button to have his pattern repeated. You, not the computer, will determine whether the pattern is valid.



## Reading Readiness

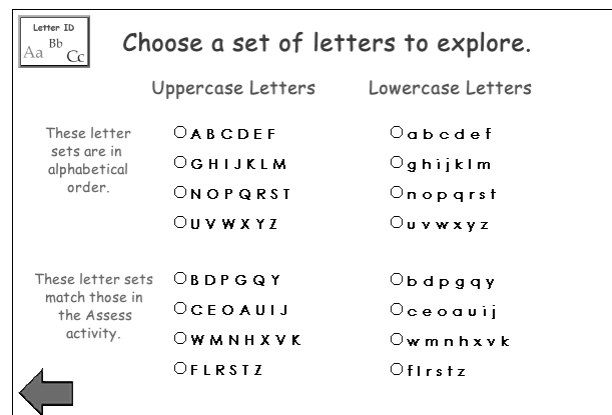
The Reading Readiness activities include two activity types: Letter ID and Letter Sounds.



After choosing one of these activities, choose either **Explore** or **Assess** (see page 17).

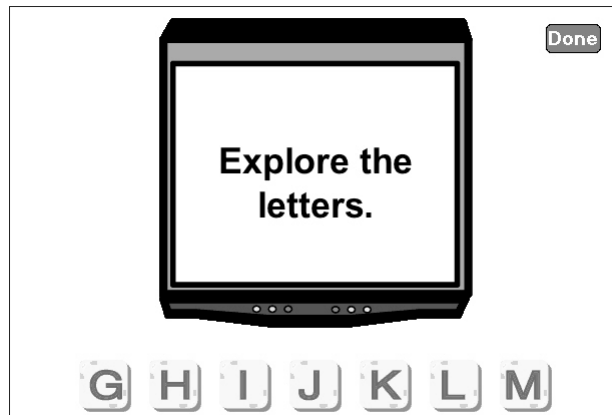
### *Letter ID—Explore*

Letter ID activities measure a learner's ability to recognize both upper and lower case letters. After choosing **Explore**, select a set of letters from the Uppercase or Lowercase Letters columns.

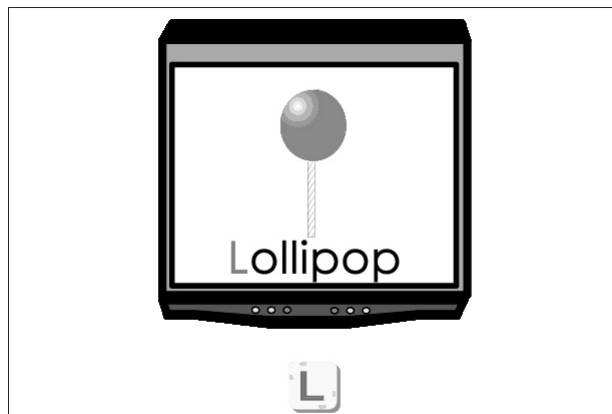


The upper letter sets present letters in alphabetical order. The lower sets match the groupings in the **Assess** activity. Using the lower sets may facilitate comparisons of **Explore** and **Assess** report data for this activity.

A screen similar to the one below will appear:



The learner selects or types a letter. An animated object whose name begins with the selected letter will animate in the TV screen.



### **Letter ID—Assess**

Choose a set of either upper or lowercase letters. The learner will be prompted to find a particular letter from the selected row. He will receive prompts at the interval you select in Preferences (see page 33).

Letter ID  
Aa Bb Cc

Choose a set of letters to find.

Uppercase Letters      Lowercase Letters

☐ BDPGQY      ☐ bdpqqy

☐ CEOAUJ      ☐ ceoauij

☐ WMNHXVK      ☐ wmnhxvk

☐ FLRSTZ      ☐ flrstz

When he clicks or types the correct letter, an animated object whose name begins with that letter will appear.

### **Letter Sounds**

The Letter Sounds activities are similar to the Letter ID activities, but this time the learner explores the sounds each letter makes. Choose a set of either upper or lower case letters.

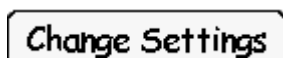
In the **Explore** activity, the learner types a letter or selects one from the row at the bottom of the screen. An object with a name that begins with that letter appears along with a prompt that announces, for example, “Pizza starts with the sound ‘puh’.”

In the **Assess** activity, he is prompted to find the letter that makes a certain sound. For example, he will be asked “Which letter makes the sound ‘guh’?”

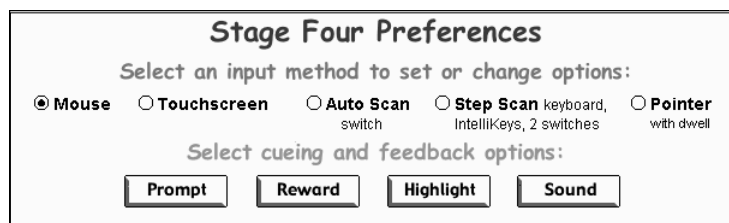
## Setting and Changing Preferences

There are several preference settings you can change that affect all the activities. These preferences are also printed on the reports to serve as a record of the settings used during the session.

The current preference settings are displayed at the bottom of the screen. When you change settings, the information in this display is updated. The settings most recently saved are in effect when you start Stage Four.



To modify preferences, click the Change Settings button. The Preferences options are shown below.



The following descriptions will help you choose settings. To make or change a setting, click the radio button for the item.

### *Input Method*

Click the radio button for the input method the learner will be using to make or change settings. Options for the input method will appear in the lower half of the screen.

#### ☒ **Mouse**

Choose **Mouse** if you are using a device to point and click. This is the initial setting. You can also choose this setting if you are using a head pointing system with a click option.

#### ☐ **Touchscreen**

Choose **Touchscreen** if you are using a built-in touchscreen or a touchscreen device that you attach to the monitor. You can choose whether to have the action occur when the learner presses down on an object or when the touch is released (the standard setting).

## ☒ **Auto Scan**

Choose **Auto Scan** to use a switch that is set to emulate a mouseclick. The switch mode is autoscan or linear scanning. Pressing the switch starts autoscanning. Each object on the screen highlights one at a time, in order. Pressing the switch again activates the highlighted object.

### *Setting the scan rate*

At the bottom of the screen, you can change the scan rate, the speed at which objects are highlighted. Choose from:

- ☐ **Slow (3 seconds)**
- ☒ **Medium (2 seconds)**
- ☐ **Fast (1 second)**

You can also enter a different number of seconds (from .5 to 10) in the text box on the right side of the screen.

### *Pausing scanning*

You can pause scanning by pressing the <Esc> key or by waiting for several cycles through all objects to be completed. In screens with 2 or 3 objects, scanning pauses after 5 cycles. In screens with more objects, scanning pauses after 3 cycles.

When scanning is paused, you can use the mouse to click on the **Exit** or **Report** button to end an activity.

To resume scanning, press the switch or mouse button.

### *Using a Discover:Switch*

If you are using a Discover:Switch™ (Madentec, Inc.), the first time you use the Stage Four activities, you will be prompted to select a setup. This prompt occurs two times: once for the application that launches Stages and once for the actual Stages application. For both, choose the setup named “Click Only Single Switch” (Macintosh) or “Click Only Single Switch.sus” (Windows). You will hear a beep when the Discover:Switch activates. For best results, choose a slow scan rate.

### *Using the Crick USB Switch Interface*

Please refer to the Q&A section of this binder for information on using this switch interface box.

### *Autoscanning using a switch with IntelliKeys*

Choose the Auto Scan input method if you want to autoscanner using a switch connected to IntelliKeys, or press IntelliKeys as if it were a switch.

Click the check box shown below to ensure that this information is included in the report.

☒ The switch is connected to IntelliKeys or the learner is using IntelliKeys as a switch.

The Stages Autoscanner overlay, which sends a mouse-click, will automatically load. With Windows, you must turn on Num Lock and check the “Use MouseKeys” option in the Accessibility Options Control Panel.

## **Step Scan**

Choose **Step Scan** if you are using a regular or alternative keyboard or two switches to step scan. Specify which input device you are using so that it will be reported correctly.

- ☐ IntelliKeys keyboard  
☒ Standard keyboard  
☐ 2 switches

The Stage Four software automatically loads the Stages Stepscan overlay if it detects that IntelliKeys is attached. Follow the directions on the Stages CD to print a copy of the overlay. (Refer to Stage 4 Read Me file in the Read Me folder in the Overlays folder on the Stages CD.)

- Press the right arrow on the overlay, <Tab> or switch 1 to step forward from object to object.
- Press the left arrow on the overlay or <Backspace> or <Delete> to step backward from object to object.
- Press the target in the middle of the overlay, or <Return> or <Enter>, or switch 2 to select the highlighted object.

In the Reading Readiness and Math Readiness Quantify activities, the learner can type the letter or number key on the keyboard (use 0 for 10). You may wish to use an overlay that came with your IntelliKeys keyboard for these activities. If you then wish to use a Stages overlay, return to the Preferences screen, select Step Scan, then click the text link to resend the Stages overlay for step scanning.



☒ **Pointer**  
(with dwell)

Choose **Pointer (with dwell)** if you are using a head pointing system or other pointing device (such as a joystick or trackball) that does not provide a means of clicking. Instead, aim the pointer at a target for a period of time to select it.

When the pointer highlights a target, a dwell period begins. An animated “counting fingers” cursor shows the dwell elapsing. When the dwell period is over, the target’s action occurs. To make the target perform its action again, move the pointer away from the target, then back to it.

*Setting the dwell time*

At the bottom of the screen, you can change the dwell time, the length of the dwell time before the target is selected.

Choose from:

- ☐ Long dwell (3 seconds)
- ☒ Medium dwell (2 seconds)
- ☐ Short dwell (1 second)

You can also enter a different number of seconds (from .5 to 10) in the text box on the right side of the screen.

To cancel a dwell in progress, move the pointer to the background or to another target.

**Prompt**

*Prompt and Feedback Options*

Click the radio button for the prompt and feedback settings you want to adjust. Options for these settings will appear in the lower half of the screen.

You can adjust the type and frequency of the prompt, which gives instructions to the learner.

Choose from three types of prompts.

- ☒ **Multisensory**
- ☐ **Visual**
- ☐ **Auditory**

The Multisensory prompt combines visual and auditory instructions. This is the initial setting.

A Visual prompt displays words and text that give instructions. There is no speech or sound accompanying a visual prompt.

An Auditory prompt presents speech that gives instructions to the learner. There is no visual cue accompanying an auditory prompt.

You can also set the frequency of the prompt, or how often it occurs.

- ☐ Every 3 seconds    ☐ Every 10 seconds  
☒ Every 5 seconds    ☐ Never (no prompts)

You can choose to have a prompt occur every 3, 5, or 10 seconds, or have no prompt at all ("Never"). The initial setting is 5 seconds.

In Explore activities, the prompt frequency is doubled to allow the learner time to explore the environment without interruption. When scanning is active, the prompt timing does not begin until autoscanning pauses after several loops through all objects.

#### Reward

The reward occurs after correct answers in Assess activities. You can choose child-oriented animated rewards with music and speech (the initial setting) or teen/adult-oriented rewards with speech. The reward for each correct response is picked at random from a set of 5 possible rewards of the specified type.



☒ Child



☐ Teen/Adult

#### Highlight

You can choose the color and thickness of the highlight border. Select a border size of 1, 4, or 7 pixels (screen dots), no border (0 pixels), or enter a custom size from 1 to 14 pixels. The initial setting is 4 pixels.

Select a color: red, white, magenta, yellow, black, cyan, green, or blue. The Sample Border box will show the effects of changing the size or the color. The initial setting is red.

## Sound

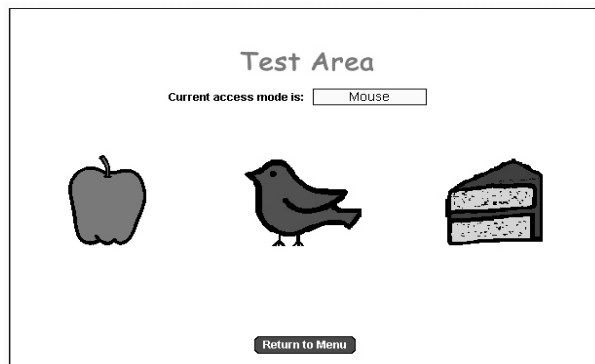
You can choose whether you want to hear a sound when objects are highlighted either by scanning or by moving the mouse pointer to an object. The initial setting is No Sound.

- ☐ Sound
- ☒ No Sound

Move the mouse over the note graphic to hear the highlight sound.

## Test Area (Try out preference settings.)

Click the Test Area button to try all the preference settings you have chosen, except prompt type and frequency.



## Exit to Activities

When you are done setting preferences, click the Exit to Activities button to return to your last screen.

## Stage Four Menus (and exiting Stage Four)

Stage Four offers several menu options. Select an item from the menu or use its keystroke equivalent, listed below.

**Open Onscreen Keyboard:** This menu item appears only when Stage Four is run on a Mercury or MiniMerc computer (from Assistive Technology, Inc.). Choose this option when you need to type and an external keyboard is not available.

**Start Over:** Return to the opening screen. You will lose any data that has been collected for the learner.

**Save:** Save the current report information to a file (see page 43). This option is available only in the report.

Macintosh: ⌘S      Windows: Ctrl-S

**Print:** Print the current screen.

Macintosh: ⌘P      Windows: Ctrl-P

**Choose a New Stage:** (All-in-One Stages CD only)

Return to the main Stages menu. (You can also select the Exit Stage Four button at the end of the report.)

Macintosh: ⌘N      Windows: Ctrl-N

**Quit:** (Stage Four CD only)

Exit Stage Four. (You can also select the Exit Stage Four button at the end of the report.)

Macintosh: ⌘Q      Windows: Ctrl-Q

# Presenting the Activities

Now that you have explored the activities on your own, you are ready to use them with a learner. It is important to use the assessment activities as intended and also to set up an appropriate environment for the learner. This section will help you and your learner get the most out of the assessment activities.

## When and How to Use the Assessment Activities

Stages assessment activities are not designed for everyday practice. They are designed to help you measure progress within each Stage of development. In particular, Stage Four activities help you observe the learner's academic readiness skills to find the skills he needs to improve before advancing toward a more traditional curriculum.

The Stages philosophy advocates a competency-based observation approach to assessment. Knowing exactly what a learner can do gives you the opportunity to design a custom curriculum perfectly tailored for that individual.

Use the accompanying Observation Form, along with performance records printed from within each activity, to form a foundation for generating an informal competency-based assessment report. As the learner uses the activities, make observations on the forms that have been developed to address this Stage. Use the onscreen reports as well as written notes you make on the Observation Form provided on page 55. Add your own category of observation on the form under "Additional Observations."

Use these results to determine which Stage is appropriate and to select target skills toward which the learner will work to achieve. Then put the Stages activities away while the learner works in a practice environment of appropriate software from many manufacturers, which are recommended for that Stage.

After the learner has worked and practiced the target set of skills, return to the Stage Four assessment activities. Adminis-

ter the activity again and compare your results. Is the learner making progress? Is the learner ready to move to another Stage?

Work alternately with Stage Four assessment activities for assessment and the third party software for practice. Keep a portfolio of the observation results as well as any visual documentation available (photos or video). You can also keep any printouts that might be available from the practice software to document steps toward achievement.

## **Preparing the Environment**

The environment for evaluating a learner's functioning stage should be a familiar one. It should be the place where he typically works, lives, and plays. Unfamiliar environments are a curiosity—a learner will attend to the details around him that are different more than he will attend to the activity we want him to use. We want to avoid as many new variables as we can, helping the learner feel the comfort of the cognitively familiar environment. When the assessment activity is introduced, he can then concentrate on the new behavior or content rather than on environmental distracters.

Because the Stages philosophy is sensitive to all facets of the learning process, consider the physical comfort of the learner. Make sure that the assistive technology team gives input to the access device selection and proper positioning of the learner in the physical environment. Be sure the learner's environment is optimal for success.

- Can the learner see the screen without glare or visual strain?
- Is the volume of sound from the computer adjusted to a comfortable level?
- Is the learner seated at the computer properly?
- Is the access device stable and in a position for consistently reliable use?
- Have the computer control panels been adjusted to maximize learner performance?
- When was the learner's last meal or snack? Does he have the proper fuel to work?
- Have necessary medications been administered properly?

In short, consider every aspect of the learner's physical comfort to be confident that a solid learning environment is available for optimum learner performance.

## **Adult Role in the Observation Process**

The learner will be making choices during these assessment activities. It is important that the work be that of the learner, not of the adult(s) or other learners in the environment. Give encouragement, but do not give the answers to the questions. Support the learner by urging him to respond and praising his attention to the tasks. Take care not to prompt the learner unnecessarily (see below).

Try a sample activity, assisting with physical movement to help orient the learner. For example, it's fine to guide the learner's actions in a hand-over-hand movement for one sample activity. Then encourage the learner to try more activities on his own as you slip into a more passive role. In addition to physical comfort, consider the emotional side of a Stage Four learner during the assessment process.

Academics can be a daunting challenge. His self-esteem needs to be consistently reinforced as he ventures into the academic arena. Keep the learner's routine and environment consistent so that he doesn't feel pressured to perform differently. If the learner normally uses a counter when working with math, or has a personal alphabet book, keep these items available to him. This will give you an opportunity to see if the learner uses them to respond to the assessment questions.

## **Prompts**

In Stage Four, the learner has more challenging work to do than in earlier Stages. The content is more demanding. For example, in the Counting activity, there are 10 targets from which to choose. The learner must carefully consider all possible responses. You must decide how prompts work best for him when you change settings. For example, if you want to make the activities appear to be self-paced so the learner has as much time as he needs to respond, select "Never" (no prompts). If you want to periodically remind him of the question he is answering, select a timed prompt. Use the computer to keep the learner focused on his task, with the goal of developing learner independence.

## Sample Verbal Prompts and Feedback

Feedback for correct responses helps reinforce the skill, and keeps the learner focused on his task. Feedback for incorrect responses takes advantage of an opportunity to teach: the learner benefits from the content-related feedback he receives after making an incorrect response, without feeling punished.

Encourage the learner verbally, both to cue and to reinforce the target behavior of access to the device and to answer the questions. However, allow for adequate response time before prompting the learner yourself, especially if you believe he understands the content.

Stage Four learners generally know when they have made a mistake. Encourage them if this should happen. Here are some prompts to consider:

When the learner makes a mistake:

- That can be so confusing.
- Sometimes I get mixed up too.
- That's OK, keep working. You are doing great!
- Oh, that's (fill in the correct response). Now I see!
- Uh, oh! (lighthearted)

When the learner is successful:

- You are right, hooray!
- Way to go, \_\_\_\_\_ (use learner's name)!
- You are really watching those choices carefully!
- Awesome! or Excellent! (or some other contemporary expression)
- Fantastic!
- How did you get so smart?

Keeping the learner on task:

- This is fun! Let's do more.
- I can't believe how hard you are working. Keep it up.
- I'm so proud of you, \_\_\_\_\_ (use learner's name).
- Keep on working; you can do it.
- Great work! Keep it up.

While it is important to encourage the learner and praise attention to both the behavior and the content, it is even more important not to interfere with the learner's perfor-



mance. If he doesn't find the target object, or if he doesn't know a word, let that happen. The information gathered will help you identify areas for further study. It is important that the work be that of the learner, not of the encouraging and well-meaning adult.

## Viewing and Using the Reports

At the end of the activities, you can see a report of the learner's session. You can look for a learner's improvement over time by administering the activities again and reviewing the resulting reports.

**The reports help you watch for improvement over time.**

The report is automatically generated using information about the settings used and data gathered about the learner's performance. At the top of the report is information based on the general settings. The bottom portion of the report displays specific data that was gathered during the session.

### *Learner's Name:*

This is the name that you entered when you started the activities. You can edit the name on this report now by clicking in the name text box and changing the name.

### *Input Method:*

This is the access method that you selected in the Preference Settings screen. If you did not change this setting, the default value of Mouse is displayed. If the input method is set to Auto Scan or Pointer, the scan rate or dwell time is also displayed.

### *Activity Type:*

This setting is displayed on reports for activities where there is a choice of Child or Teen/Adult scenes.

### *Prompt Frequency:*

This is the frequency of prompt that you selected in the Preference Settings screen. If you did not change this setting, the default value of 5 seconds is displayed.

### *Prompt Type:*

This is the type of prompt that you selected in the Preference Settings screen. If you did not change this setting, the default value of Multisensory is displayed.

***Date and Time:***

The date and time that the report was generated is displayed at the bottom of the screen. If this information is not correct, check the setting of your computer's clock.

***Number of Presses:***

In Explore activities, how many times did the learner select each object?

***Number of Tries:***

In Assess activities, how many attempts did the learner make to answer the question?

***Correct?***

Did learner respond correctly to the question? (Yes or No.)

***Number of Prompts:***

How many prompts were presented during the activity? The initial prompt is not counted.

***Time on Activity:***

How long did the learner spend on the activity? The timer starts when the first screen for the activity opens and ends when the last screen of the activity closes. The duration is displayed in minutes and seconds. Example: 1:06 = 1 minute and 6 seconds.

***Did Learner Finish:***

In the Assess activities, did the learner respond to all questions? If so, the word "Yes" appears in this column. If the adult used the arrow at the upper right of the screen to cancel the activity, the word "No" is displayed.

***Printing the Report***



Click the Print button or choose Print from the File menu to print the report screen. This report looks different than a printout of the disk file, which is only text; however, the information is the same. You can also use the keyboard command for your computer:

Macintosh:   ⌘P  
Windows:     Ctrl-P

## *Saving the Report*



To save the report, click the **Save** button. You can also use the keyboard command for your computer:

Macintosh:   ⌘S  
Windows:     Ctrl-S

A dialog box appears with a file name that describes the content of the report. You can change the name of the report if you prefer. On a Windows computer, it is important to keep the ".txt" extension at the end of the file name so that it will be recognized as a WordPad document. If a file with the same name already exists in the folder, you can either replace it with the contents of the new file or choose a different file name.

The first time during each session that you save a report, a default file location is used. On a Windows computer, this location is the "C:\My Documents" folder. (If this folder does not exist, the Desktop is used instead.) On the Macintosh, the default location is usually the main folder of the hard drive. (If the location is the CD and not the hard drive, refer to the Technical Q&A section of this binder for instructions on how to change this.)

**STAGES REPORT  
WIZARD**  
automatically  
graphs the data  
saved in your  
reports.

You can browse to select a different folder for your reports and even create a new folder. Future reports that you save during the same session will use the save location you select. If you are using Stages Report Wizard, save all the learner's reports to his or her folder in the My Stages Reports folder.

For information on importing the saved report files into other applications, refer to the Q&A section of this binder.

## *Finishing the Report*



After viewing and printing the report, click the **Done** button at the bottom of the screen. You can then:

- change to a different learner;
- change to a different activity or change settings;
- choose another activity of the same type;
- quit the program.

Note that leaving the report will erase all current data.



# Observing the Learner

This section will help you understand how to observe a learner and use the information from these observations.

## Making Observations

The child should be familiar with the teacher or therapist who will work with him on these Stages activities. The teacher or therapist may gain tremendous insight about how the learner thinks and where his abilities break down during these assessment activities.

Generally, the learner should not see you recording his performance. It's ideal if another adult who is commonly in the learning environment can record the observations. One adult can encourage the learner and the other can record behaviors during the assessment activity without being noticed by the learner.

The accuracy of the data collected during the session is validated when two adults in the same environment observe the same behaviors. Finally, an ideal environment would include an unobtrusive video or still camera. Documenting a learner's performance allows the IEP team to observe results as part of the reporting and assessment process.

Is the learner properly positioned in the learning environment? Is the learner comfortable? Only if you are confident that the environmental conditions are conducive for evaluation can the results be considered.

## Interpreting Observation Results

Use the Observation Form to record learner behavior during the activities. Watch for the behaviors identified on the forms; add your own under "Additional Observations."

In Stage Four we begin to see the learner demonstrate traditional academic and social readiness. Use the Observation Form that follows to record learner behavior during the activities. Be sure you have set the stage for the assessment

activities carefully. While the computer gives you data on actual performance for each question asked during the activity, the Observation Form provides you with an opportunity to discuss the learner's behavior and your personal impressions of what occurred during the assessment. Here's where you might comment if you felt that the learner really did understand a question, but responded incorrectly.

Stage Four assessment software cannot measure each and every academic and social readiness skill. However, a careful observer can watch and note these behaviors and skills. The learner is ready to move from Stage Four to Stage Five when he exhibits the academic readiness skills and social behavior competency skills specified in a mandated local curriculum.

As the learner moves on from Stage Four, he will understand how letters and numbers work and how to apply concepts such as spatial sense. He will identify numbers and begin counting out loud if he is able to speak. A significant indicator that a learner is ready to begin reading is to observe how he handles print. To show reading readiness, he will move his finger or appropriate pointer to touch the first letter of a word and the last letter of a word. He can point to a single word. He moves a finger or pointer across the page from left to right and points to words as he hears them, even if he does not point to the correct word. He expresses interest in knowing how words are spelled, and how personal words are written.

## **Explore Mode**

**Question 1** asks you to observe who is actually making the choices during Explore/Divergent activities. These open-ended activities allow the learner to explore for as long as he likes. If the learner seems distracted or if the adult makes the choices and needs to reorient the learner, this may indicate that he needs to work more at Stage Four. If the learner is engaged or deliberate about the activity, this may indicate that he has accomplished Stage Four skills.

Observe the learner's enthusiasm toward the activity. If the learner seems very confident and excited, that might indicate his enthusiasm for expressing his knowledge within the Stages environment. Can the learner use the access device

comfortably? Does the learner need more practice with Stage Four content? Consider both process and content when interpreting learner behavior and vocalizations.

Observe the learner's comfort with the access device. Now that the learner is being asked to answer academic questions, make sure that an appropriate access process—pointing and clicking, making choices—leads to unlocking what the learner knows about the content.

## **Assess Mode**

**Question 2** asks you to observe the learner's ability to identify colors correctly. Does the learner tend to like some colors more than other colors? Does he respond incorrectly to questions about the colors he dislikes? A consistent error pattern or confusion indicates which colors need more study.

**Question 3** asks you to observe the learner's ability to correctly identify basic geometric shapes. Does he understand some shapes better than others? Does he respond incorrectly to questions about shapes he does not understand? A consistent error pattern or confusion indicates which shapes need more study.

**Question 4** asks you to observe the learner's ability to correctly identify upper and lower case letters. Does he respond incorrectly to letters that he has trouble identifying? Does he use a personal alphabet book or any other manipulative on a daily basis, and did he use them during the assessment? Did he understand how to apply his tools in this new situation? A consistent error pattern or confusion indicates which letters need more study. These responses can also show you how to coach him to use his study materials correctly.

Note that the activity groups letters by shapes, because letters within these groups often confuse learners. "Circle and stick" letters such as "b" and "d" are presented together, as are letters formed with a "hump" such as "n," "m," "h," and "u." Note consistent error patterns on the Observation Form, as they may help isolate the letters that cause confusion and need more work.

**Question 5** asks you to observe the learner's ability to identify the phonetic sound made by letters. Does he respond equally well to questions using upper case and lower case letters? Does he respond incorrectly to questions about letter sounds that he has trouble identifying? Does he use a personal alphabet book or any other manipulative every day, and did he use them during the assessment? Did he understand how to apply his tools in this new situation? A consistent error pattern or confusion indicates which letters need more study. These responses can also show you how to coach him to use his study materials correctly.

**Question 6** asks you to observe the learner's ability to correctly identify numerals 0–10. Does he identify some numbers better than others? Does he respond incorrectly to questions about numerals that he has trouble identifying? Does he use a number line or any other manipulatives daily, and did he use them during the assessment? Did he understand how to apply his tools in this new situation? A consistent error pattern or confusion indicates which numerals need more study. These responses can also show you how to coach him to use his study materials correctly.

**Question 7** asks you to observe the learner's ability to correctly identify the quantities represented by numerals 1–10. Does he respond incorrectly to questions about quantities that he has trouble identifying? Does he seem to understand one-to-one correspondence? Does he use any compensatory skills in counting, such as tapping his finger or creating any sort of auditory cue as he counts? Does he use a number line or any other manipulatives daily, and did he use them during the assessment? Did he understand how to apply his tools in this new situation? A consistent error pattern or confusion indicates which numerals and quantities need more study. These responses can also show you how to coach him to use his study materials correctly.

**Question 8** asks you to observe the learner's ability to compare size and spatial relationships. Does he respond incorrectly to questions about certain comparisons? Does he seem to understand the concept of how one object relates to another? Does he understand relative differences in size or position? A consistent error pattern or confusion indicates which concepts need more study.



**Question 9** asks you to observe the learner's ability to recognize and then complete a pattern. Does he respond incorrectly to questions about certain variables or attributes in the pattern? Does he seem to understand how one-variable and two-variable patterns work? A consistent error pattern or confusion indicates which concepts need more study.

**Question 10** asks you to observe the learner's ability to create a pattern independently. Does he make a pattern? If so, which was the primary variable used (color or shape), or did the learner use more than one variable? If the learner did not generate a pattern, did you detect an apparent reason for the shapes that were selected?

## **Interpreting Report Data**

### *Color Activities*

Color activities help you to measure a learner's grasp of a typical preschool curriculum. This data is straightforward: if the learner selects the correct colors, he has mastered this skill. If not, turn to the Stage Four Software Comparison Chart following page 65 to find software that can help him practice color identification. Continue to teach these skills using environmental labeling and verbal repetition.

### *Shape Activities (follow NCTM Geometry Standard for Grades Pre-K through 2—see Math Activities section below)*

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) reports that geometry is important to learners because it is a systematic tool to describe the world. Learners are intrigued and motivated by spatial concepts, and their strengths in this area often lead to early development of numerical skills. Therefore, encouraging this interest in mathematics can improve their number understanding and skills development.

Shape activities help determine which geometric shapes a learner can identify, and which might require further study. When a learner knows all of the shapes tested, he has mastered Stage Four shape skills.

### *Math Readiness Activities*

The foundation of the NCTM's curriculum standards is observing how the learner processes information. The Stage

Four Math Readiness Activities address each of the ten NCTM standards for learners in grades Pre-K through 2, but not every skill within each standard.

NCTM Standards for Learners in Grades Pre-K-2:

- Number and Operations
- Algebra
- Geometry
- Measurement
- Data Analysis & Probability
- Problem Solving
- Reasoning & Proof
- Communication
- Connections
- Representation

Although several of these topics appear to be highly complex for developing learners, the standards give simple examples of their applications in Pre-K-2 classroom activities.

***Math Readiness Activities—Quantify***  
***(NCTM Number and Operations Standard)***

***Identify Numbers***

Recognizing and identifying the numerals 0 through 10 is the building block for understanding place value, and it lays the foundation for learning computation in later Stages. When a Stage Four learner masters the numbers 0–10, he is ready to move to Stage Five activities.

***Math Readiness Activities—Quantify***  
***(NCTM Number and Operations Standard)***

***Count up to 10***

This activity determines if the learner understands the quantities represented by the numbers 1 to 10. When a Stage Four learner can count and quantify these numbers accurately, he is ready to move to Stage Five.

***Math Readiness Activities—Compare***  
***(NCTM Measurement, Communication and Connections Standards)***

***Estimating Skills (size and amount)***

Relative number relationships are the foundation for more advanced concepts in later Stages. In these activities, estima-

tion involves concepts of amount (more or less) and size (small, medium and large). This Stages activity gives the learner the chance to demonstrate understanding of the relativity of objects and the corresponding vocabulary. When he has mastered this vocabulary, he is ready to move on to Stage Five.

***Math Activities—Spatial Relationships***  
***(NCTM Geometry, Communication and Connections Standards)***

A Stage Four learner needs to master everyday relationships such as above and below, over and under, right and left. Learning this language will prepare him for more advanced topics. Once he has mastered this vocabulary he is ready to move on to Stage Five.

***Math Activities—Pattern Recognition***  
***(NCTM Algebra, Geometry, Measurement, Data Analysis & Probability, Problem Solving, Reasoning and Proof, and Representation Standards)***

The world is full of patterns that illustrate the application of mathematical concepts. The ability to notice and describe a pattern demonstrates a learner's ability to organize information and understand connections among mathematical topics.

Pattern Recognition (color and shape) serves as a foundation for the more abstract ideas that will be assessed in later Stages. The learner will also begin to see patterns in other areas such as reading, spelling, art or music. Patterns can involve variables such as color and shape. When a learner is able to use these properties or attributes in identifying and creating a pattern, he demonstrates his ability to recognize fundamental mathematical relationships. He is ready to move on to Stage Five when he is able to create his own pattern, showing that he can think logically.

***Reading Readiness Activities—Letter Identification***

Because recognition of upper and lower case letters is a critical component of reading readiness, it is a goal for Stage Four learners. They need to understand similarities and differences between letters. For example, several lower case letters consist of a circle and a stick, but they are differentiated by the position of the circle and stick. Use this activity to

determine which letters the learner knows, and which he needs to learn.

### ***Reading Readiness Activities—Letter Sounds***

The learner needs to understand the sound each individual letter makes before he can take the first step in phonemic awareness, which is to notice when words start with the same sound (the onset sound). Once he distinguishes when words have the same initial sound, he can learn which letters make which sounds within a word. The Letter Sounds activity determines a learner's ability to hear and identify the onset sound for each letter of the alphabet. Only the short vowel sound is considered for vowels.

While this activity will help determine which letter sounds the learner has mastered and which need further work, it will not reveal that the learner understands how to apply phonemic skills in all word patterns. Once he can start to put letter sounds together and begins to try to sound out words, he is ready to move on to Stage Five.

## **Moving to Stage Five**

An emerging Stage Five learner is learning to read. A progressing Stage Five learner applies reading skills in various activities within a range of content areas. In order to be successful at Stage Five activities, the learner must be able to identify and then apply the phonics for all letters. Therefore a Stage Four learner is ready to move ahead when he is 100% successful at the reading readiness activities.

At Stage Five a learner must be able to apply the concepts covered by the mathematics foundation set in Stage Four. For example, a Stage Five learner must understand which number is larger than another when practicing regrouping skills in subtraction problems. Without mastery of Stage Four math skills, a Stage Five learner would have difficulty. Once Stage Four skills are mastered, the learner is ready for Stage Five content.

Why must a Stage Four learner be 100% successful before moving forward? The Stages philosophy is very sensitive to the emotional side of learning. Throughout the first four

Stages, we've been very careful to support the learner through the discovery process. We've deliberately constructed environments that are risk-free so that self-confidence and comfort in the learning procedures could result in a greater likelihood for success. We have been developing a love for learning in nonthreatening ways.

In order for a Stage Five learner to be successful, he must be able to apply the building blocks addressed during Stage Four. Without these in place, a learner's self-esteem might be at risk in the more academically challenging Stage Five environment. Therefore it is recommended that the Stage Four learner move ahead only when Stage Four skills are complete.



# Observation Form—Stage Four

Learner's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Recorder's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Other Observer's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Setting for Observation \_\_\_\_\_

Using informal observation techniques, record the following information so that you can accurately interpret learner performance.

## *Assessment Environment:*

View the screen on the same eye level as the learner. Is there a glare on the screen?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

(If so, adjust window blinds, reposition the computer and learner's seat, or construct a shade for the monitor to eliminate the glare.)

Describe the setting:

\_\_\_\_\_ learner's regular setting \_\_\_\_\_ familiar but not everyday \_\_\_\_\_ unfamiliar

Position the learner is facing:

\_\_\_\_\_ toward the center of the room

\_\_\_\_\_ away from the center of the room

Are there any distracting objects nearby? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Is the learner properly positioned? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Should these or any other factors be considered when interpreting results?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Copy these pages before recording your observations.**

(This form is also provided as a PDF on the Stages CD.)

(over)

### *Explore Activities*

1. How did the activity generally end? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Was the learner interested and paying attention? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Does the Time on the Activity measure in the report screen indicate true behavior?  
\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Did the learner attempt to click on any background objects rather than target  
objects? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

If Yes, do you think the learner understood the directions? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Was the learner exploring? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Was there a pattern to the region of the screen selected? For example, was there a  
tendency to select objects only on one section of the screen? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Were there any vocalizations? (Did the learner express confidence: "This is fun,"  
"This is easy" or frustration: "I can't do this"?) \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

If so, please describe. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Did you notice any access or targeting issues for moving the mouse and clicking on  
the desired response? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

If so, please describe. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If scanning, was the learner able to wait for the target object? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No  
Was the learner positioned for optimal use of the access device?  
\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No



Did the learner require a prompt to respond or use the access device accurately?  
\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Did the learner know where to focus attention (device vs. computer screen)?  
\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

### *Assess Activities*

2. In the **Colors** activity, does there seem to be any preference for a specific color? Was there a consistent error pattern? For example, does the learner seem to click on a specific color consistently rather than the one that's being asked for?  
\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. In the **Shapes** activity, does there seem to be any preference for a specific shape? Was there a consistent error pattern? For example, does the learner seem to click on a specific shape consistently rather than the one that's being asked for?  
\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. In the **Letter Identification** activity, does there seem to be any pattern of errors? For example, does the learner seem to be confused by the letters formed by making a hump ("n" and "h") or any letters formed with a circle and a stick? Did you observe a reversal pattern? For example, did the learner confuse "b" with "d"? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Note if the learner tries to type keys for letters that aren't available on the screen.

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. In the **Letter Sounds Identification** activity, does there seem to be any pattern of errors? For example, does the learner seem to be confused by the letters with similar sounds ("n" and "m")? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Note if the learner tries to type keys for letters that aren't available on the screen.

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Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

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6. In the **Math Number Identification** activity, does there seem to be any pattern of errors? For example, does the learner seem to be confused by numbers with similar shapes ("3" and "8")? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

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7. In the **Math Counting** activity, does there seem to be any pattern of errors? For example, does the learner seem not to understand one-to-one correspondence? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Note if the learner touches the screen to count objects. \_\_\_\_\_

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

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8. In the **Math Comparing** activity, does there seem to be any pattern of errors? For example, does the learner seem to understand size comparisons (big/little) but not spatial comparisons (left/right)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. In the **Make Patterns-Fill In** activity, does there seem to be any pattern of errors? For example, can the learner determine the pattern if the missing next object is at the end of the pattern presented but not in the middle?  
☐ Yes ☐ No

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. In the **Make Patterns-Create** activity, did the learner make a pattern?  
☐ Yes ☐ No

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

11. Additional Observations:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Place this form and report printouts in the learner's portfolio.**

[illegible]

# Practice Software for Stage Four

## General Software Considerations

**Look for ways to adjust Stage Four software for your learner.**

It is important to note that many software programs suggested can be recommended at more than one Stage. These programs provide varied content and malleable preference settings that allow for custom presentations.

By making adjustments to such areas as input option or specific content for a color identification activity, you can use the same software program successfully at several Stages. For example, you may turn off animation for learners who might have a startle reaction to that event on the screen. Or you might turn on auditory prompting for learners who have visual challenges. Use every possible setting to best support and facilitate the learning process and customize the content of the activity.

Keep in mind that Stage Four software may be used recreationally for a learner who is functioning or developing skills at a higher Stage. The design of the software and its content, graphics, and sound would be familiar or easy to grasp. This comfortable environment could serve as fun and relaxing play or provide a practice arena.

Stages recommends individual software titles because they are effective and valuable resources that help our target learners accomplish their developmental goals—not because they are the most dynamic or up-to-date. In fact, some recommended programs have been available for several years and may appear to be outdated. Oftentimes recycled or older computer equipment is what's available for our target learners. As long as the software offers valuable activities and still may be found in schools or homes as of the publication date of this document, it remains on the list.

## Exploring Software Settings

Software that is appropriate for Stage Four is available from many developers. These recommended programs are included in the feature Comparison Chart that follows. As you look to identify software that is appropriate for an individual learner, keep the following in mind.

### *Input modes*

Software appropriate for use at Stage Four generally expects only a click or some other selection key, such as a space bar. A menu of input device options should be available in the software, as well as a way to indicate which selection key is active. This way the software knows whether to watch for a click or selection key, and what type of device is making the selection. Some software may allow single keys to be used to type a number or a letter in matching or counting activities.

While not all software accommodates fine-tuning, sometimes the access device itself will have preference settings, which you can adjust to create the same effect for the learner's access environment. Work with the assistive technology team or specialist to determine the best way to configure the environment for success.

### *Adjusting settings for various types of learners*

Explore settings that fit the learner's preferences and needs, but don't feel you need to try every available setting, as the learner may become confused. At Stage Four, the computer environment must be consistent or the learner won't establish the connection between his behavior and the results that happen on the screen.

In all Stage Four software, look to see if there is an option to add your own images and sounds, as well as to tailor the presentation of the content. At Stage Four, we want images and sounds that are both familiar and comfortable for the learner. We also want to customize the content so that only skills in need of practice appear in the computer activities. For example, if the learner has mastered the letters in his name, but not other letters, customize letter activities so that only the ones needing practice appear on the screen. As only some software programs permit such customizing, finding as many other ways to customize the interaction is important.

## How to Use the Chart

The chart on the following pages compares recommended software for Stage Four. Each title offers specific features that may be critical to a learner's success. Use this chart to help determine which software might be most beneficial for your particular learners.

The software that is recommended at this Stage will let the learner work on a range of both academic and social skills. Frequently a publisher will make multiple abilities levels available within the same software program. Be sure to pay close attention to the options and settings within the practice environments and make sure that only the appropriate target skills are reflected in the activities content settings. These steps will help you provide a risk-free learning and assessment environment for the learner that will support his future success.

The titles are arranged alphabetically within these categories: **Math Readiness, Reading Readiness, Play Activities, and General Learning.**

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The following terms are used in the chart.

<b>Title</b>	The name of the software program.
<b>Publisher</b>	The name of the company that makes or sells the software.
<b>Platform</b>	<p>The types of computers that can run the software.</p> <p><i>Mac:</i> Macintosh® computers</p> <p><i>Win:</i> PC computers running the Windows® operating system</p> <p><i>DOS:</i> PC computers running the DOS operating system (older models)</p> <p>Software is available on CD-ROM, unless otherwise noted.</p> <p><i>Mac/Win:</i> This software is available for both platforms on the same CD.</p> <p><i>Mac, Win:</i> This software is available for both platforms, but may be packaged separately.</p>
<b>Access Options</b>	<p>The types of input methods that the program supports.</p> <p><i>Keyboard:</i> You can use a standard or alternative keyboard such as IntelliKeys® or an accessible onscreen keyboard.</p> <p><i>Mouse:</i> You can use a standard mouse or mouse emulator, which you can use to point and click.</p> <p><i>Touchscreen:</i> You can use a touchscreen, either built into the computer or attached to a monitor.</p>

	<p><i>IntelliKeys:</i> This program is set up to use an IntelliKeys® alternative keyboard from IntelliTools, Inc.</p> <p><i>Switch:</i> You can use a switch with this program.</p> <p><i>Other:</i> Any other methods supported by the software.</p>
<b>Curriculum Areas</b>	The main topics addressed in the software.
<b>Content</b>	More detailed information about the content in the software.
<b>Prompt Options</b>	<p>The way in which the learner is encouraged to use the device.</p> <p><i>Auditory:</i> Speech or a sound is used as a prompt.</p> <p><i>Visual:</i> A silent animation or graphic is used as a prompt.</p> <p><i>Multisensory:</i> Sound and animation are used as a prompt.</p>
<b>Feedback Type</b>	<p>The event that occurs when the learner uses the device.</p> <p><i>Auditory:</i> Sound plays or spoken text occurs.</p> <p><i>Visual:</i> An animation or graphical image is displayed.</p> <p><i>Multisensory:</i> Both sound and animation are played.</p>
<b>Graphics</b>	Whether the graphics are appropriate for child or teen learners, or if the graphics are generic (can be used by either group).
<b>Record Keeping</b>	The data that is collected by the software to keep track of the learner's actions while using the program. In these charts, a reference to "Time" indicates the amount of time spent on the activity.
<b>Can Activity be Saved or Printed?</b>	Whether the software allows the activity or screen to be saved or printed. (Generally, the screen image can also be captured using system keystrokes, such as ⌘-shift-3 on the Macintosh or <alt>-<print screen> on a Windows machine.)
<b>Customizing Options</b>	The main features of the program that can be adjusted for an individual learner.
<b>Keyboard Shortcuts</b>	Major keystroke commands for changing settings, ending an activity, and exiting the program.
<b>Other Settings and Features</b>	Additional capabilities of each program are included here.



**Also appropriate at:**

Other Stages at which this title may be appropriate are listed. You may need to change settings within the software to make it function suitably for learners at these other Stages. Using software at more than one Stage can help reinforce prior learning, introduce new concepts in a familiar environment, and extend the useful life of software in your collection.

The last page of the chart lists titles in other Stages that may also be appropriate at Stage Four.

Stage Four Software Comparison Chart

Title	1-2-3 Sequence Me†	Attribute Tiles	Bailey's Book House	Basic Attainment
<b>Publisher</b>	Sunburst Communications, Inc.	Attainment Company	Riverdeep	Attainment Company
<b>Platform</b>	Mac / Win	Mac / Win	Mac / Win	Mac / Win
<b>Access Options</b>				
Keyboard			√	√
Mouse	√	√	√	√
Touchscreen	√	√	√	√
IntelliKeys			√ (overlays available)	√
Switch		√ (single)	√ (1-switch auto)	√ (1-switch auto)
Other			setups for Ke:nx available	
<b>Curriculum Area</b>	Math Readiness, Reading Readiness	Math Readiness, Colors, Shapes, Reading Readiness	Reading Readiness, Creativity	General Learning, Math Readiness, Colors, Shapes
<b>Content</b>	sequencing activities using pictures, words or both; choices for number of puzzles: 5, 10, 15 or 20	discriminating color, shape, and size cues. learn associated language	prepositions, letter ID, rhymes, story and card making	name, match, and game activities with colors, shapes, and numbers; includes onscreen coloring book
<b>Prompt options</b>				
Auditory			√	
Visual	√		√	√
Multisensory				
<b>Feedback</b>	two incorrect tries before correct answer given	<⌘/ctrl+L> louder, <⌘/ctrl+S> softer	incorrect items eliminated	incorrect: soft, low tone; unlimited responses
Auditory		√ (supported w/ text)		
Visual				
Multisensory			√	√
<b>Graphics</b>	child	generic	child	generic
<b>Record Keeping</b>				
<b>Can activity be saved or printed?</b>			can print cards or posters, stories as booklets or 4-panel sheets	can print pictures from CD for off-computer activities
<b>Customizing options</b>	can choose pictures, words, or both to sequence	can adjust presentation (number and type of objects), speech	can vary scanning speed, turn off music, change keyboard layout	can adjust presentation (number and type of objects); scanning speed; can turn music/speech/sound effects off
<b>Keyboard Shortcuts</b>	<⌘/ctrl+Q>: quit, <esc>: cancel or exit activity	<⌘/ctrl+O>: options, <⌘/ctrl+Q>: quit	<⌘/ctrl+option+A>: adult/instructor area	<D>one, <M>ore
<b>Other settings and features</b>			Classroom and home activities; learning goals; thorough documentation. Formerly published by Edmark.	this program is an updated version of Colorful Concepts
<b>Also appropriate at:</b>			Stage 3	

Stage Four Software Comparison Chart

Title	Coloring Books†	Dino-GAMES	Early Emerging Rules Series: Negation, Plurals, Prepositions
Publisher	IntelliTools, Inc.	Academic Software, Inc.	Laureate Learning Systems
Platform	Mac	Mac, Win	Mac / Win
Access Options			
Keyboard	✓	can change equivalent	✓
Mouse	✓	✓	✓
Touchscreen	✓	✓	✓
IntelliKeys	✓ (overlays included)		
Switch	✓ (1-switch auto)	✓ (1-switch auto)	✓ (auto, step)
Other		can set scan rate and mode	
Curriculum Area	Play Activities, Colors, Creativity	General Learning, Play activities, Math readiness	General Learning, Reading Readiness, Language Development
Content	different pictures to print out or color using IntelliPaint; animal and holiday themes	four titles: Dino-FIND: colors and shapes; Dino-MAZE: navigating mazes; Dino-DOT: dot-to-dot; Dino-LIKE: find matching dinosaur	three separate titles: negations, plurals, prepositions; contains explore and assess activities
Prompt options			
Auditory	✓ (picture labels)		✓
Visual			✓
Multisensory			
Feedback		unlimited tries, animation can be changed	flashing item with animation on first incorrect; animation and correct answer on second incorrect
Auditory		music optional	✓
Visual			✓
Multisensory			✓
Graphics	child	child	child and teen
Record Keeping			learner name, activity, date, time, items completed, number and % correct, settings, time to complete, comments
Can activity be saved or printed?	pictures may be printed when completed or for coloring with crayons	none	can print report
Customizing options	can create custom coloring books using library or imported graphics and sounds; can change number of colors, scanning speed, highlight, and sound	can use fixed or random reward music	can hide/show menus and cursor
Keyboard Shortcuts	menu for navigating to coloring book pages	<esc> key to return to menu <G> or <esc> key for game options	<esc>: exit lesson, <⌘/ctrl+D>: define lesson
Other settings and features			manuals review recent research describing the program's rationale
Also appropriate at:		Stage 3	Stage 2, Stage 3, Stage 5, Stage 7

Stage Four Software Comparison Chart

Title	Early Learning I	Early Songs & Play Collections I and II	Every Day is a Holiday
Publisher	Marblesoft	Linda Burkhart	UCLA Intervention Program
Platform	Mac diskette or CD*	Mac / Win	Mac diskette
Access Options			
Keyboard	√		√
Mouse	√	√	√
Touchscreen	√	√	
IntelliKeys	√ (overlays included)	√ (overlays included)	
Switch	√ (1-switch auto)	√ (auto, step)	
Other	Ke:nx On:Board, BigKeys, PowerPad		
Curriculum Area	General Learning, Math Readiness, Reading Readiness	Play Activities	General Learning, Holidays, Play activities
Content	letters, colors, shapes, numbers	<i>Early Play:</i> virtual play activities with balloons, blocks and clay; song activities (formerly <i>Songs and Play</i> ): Illustrated songs (Spider Song, 5 in a Bed, Big/Small-Fast/Slow) present concept of sequences	8 interactive holiday scenes allow learner to decorate tree, fill basket, set dinner table, make cards, etc.
Prompt options	sound, speech, written, repeat		
Auditory	√	√ (picture labels)	
Visual			√
Multisensory			
Feedback	incorrect: auditory feedback; can choose "don't say no" for incorrect response		
Auditory	√ (with options)		√
Visual	√ (with options)		
Multisensory	√ (with options)	√	
Graphics	teen/adult	child	generic
Record Keeping	learner name, level of difficulty, problems completed, number correct and incorrect		
Can activity be saved or printed?	can save student data and preferences and print report	can save activity preferences	can print activity
Customizing options	can adjust prompt frequency, scanning, highlight, background, reward, font, speak student name during feedback	simple or complex levels of play; simple overlays provide 2 action choices; complex provide choice of play material and 4 action choices	page setup
Keyboard Shortcuts	⌘I for input, ⌘L for levels	<⌘/ctrl>+<arrow>: navigate through pictures in the sequence	
Other settings and features	customizing feedback allows activity to be used with any age; choose level, rate of advancement; *part of Early Learning Suite		
Also appropriate at:		Stage 2 (random target selection); Stage 3	

Stage Four Software Comparison Chart

Title	Exploring Patterns†	Following Directions: One & Two Level Commands, Left and Right	Forrest Center Stage	From A to Z
Publisher	IntelliTools, Inc.	Laureate Learning Systems	ORCCA Technology	Inclusive Technology Ltd.
Platform	Mac	Mac / Win	Win	Win
Access Options				
Keyboard	√	√	√	√ (space, enter)
Mouse	√	√	√	√
Touchscreen	√	√		√
IntelliKeys	√ (overlays included)			√
Switch	√ (auto, step)	√ (auto)		√ ( step)
Other				
Curriculum Area	Math Readiness	General Learning, Reading Readiness, Critical Thinking	General Learning, Assistive technology in everyday life, reading readiness	Reading
Content	various pattern activities with sound and colors	single commands, 2 commands separately and in sequence, 3 levels of activity	interactive storybook; a boy named Forrest and his friends use assistive technology in various environments	letter identification, sight words, making words, matching words with pictures
Prompt options				
Auditory	√	√		
Visual	√			√
Multisensory			√	
Feedback	incorrect entries highlighted by boxes	up to 3 incorrect answers before correct answer is presented		
Auditory	√ (optional)	√		√
Visual	√	√		√
Multisensory		√	√	√
Graphics	generic	generic	child/teen	drawings (child)
Record Keeping	name of student and class	learner name, activity, date, time, items completed, number and % correct, settings, time to complete, comments		save settings
Can activity be saved or printed?	can print activity	can print report; can add comments to report	none	settings saved
Customizing options	can record custom sounds	can hide/show menus, cursor		music off, letter sounds/names spoken, capital/lowercase, number of letters displayed, activity choices, prompt delay
Keyboard Shortcuts	⌘W: play audio, ⌘=: check work	<esc>: exit, <⌘/ctrl+H>: hide cursor, <⌘/ctrl+space>: menu, <⌘/ctrl+P>: pause	<esc> key to quit program	
Other settings and features	choose objects	instructional content and student suggestions section at the end	resource guide with pictures, descriptions, resources	printable activity sheets
Also appropriate at:			Stage 5	Stage 5

Stage Four Software Comparison Chart

Title	I Know American History	IntelliMathics Counting Sports Ball Template	IntelliMathics Counting Template, Counting Trucks Activity
Publisher	SoftTouch, Inc.	IntelliTools, Inc.	IntelliTools, Inc.
Platform	Mac / Win	Mac, Win	Mac, Win
Access Options			
Keyboard	√	√	√
Mouse	√	√	√
Touchscreen	√	√	√
IntelliKeys	√ (overlays available)	√ (overlays available)	√ (overlays available)
Switch	√ (auto, step)	√ (can set rate)	√ (can set rate)
Other			
Curriculum Area	History	Math	Math
Content	5 curriculum themes with nine topics per theme, presented in three different language levels, can select activities	one to one correspondence, counting skills, vocabulary development	one to one correspondence, numerical values 1 - 10
Prompt options			
Auditory		√	√
Visual			
Multisensory	√		
Feedback	Learner is rewarded with a picture and sound (optional) when mouse equivalent is pressed.		
Auditory		√ (can change voice)	√ (can change voice)
Visual		√ (customizable)	√ (customizable)
Multisensory	√ (sound optional)		
Graphics	child, teen	generic (can import)	generic
Record Keeping	collect data for multiple students	Portfolio mgmt, student login, assignments, detail/summary performance assessment.	Portfolio mgmt, student login, assignments, detail/summary performance assessment.
Can activity be saved or printed?	save student preferences, print data	All records and activities can be saved or printed	All records and activities can be saved or printed
Customizing options	single or double switch access with step scanning	Customizable toolbars/quizzes. Can use word banks. Word prediction and interface settings.	Customizable toolbars/quizzes. Can use word banks. Word prediction and interface settings.
Keyboard Shortcuts	<ctrl>: access, <m>: menu	<⌘/ctrl + M>: menu, <⌘/ctrl+shift+O>: preferences	<⌘/ctrl + M>: menu, <⌘/ctrl+shift+O>: preferences
Other settings and features		Part of IntelliTools Studio Classroom Suite. Can import graphics, video, audio	Part of IntelliTools Studio Classroom Suite. Can import graphics, video, audio
Also appropriate at:	Stage 5		

Stage Four Software Comparison Chart

Title	IntelliMaths Seashore Animals Activity	IntelliTalk III Shapes and Patterns Activity	IntelliPics Studio III Animals in the Forest Activity	IntelliPics Studio III Explore Template
Publisher	IntelliTools, Inc.	IntelliTools, Inc.	IntelliTools, Inc.	IntelliTools, Inc.
Platform	Mac, Win	Mac, Win	Mac, Win	Mac, Win
Access Options				
Keyboard	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mouse	✓	✓	✓	✓
Touchscreen	✓	✓	✓	✓
IntelliKeys	✓ (overlays available)	✓ (overlays available)	✓ (overlays available)	✓ (overlays available)
Switch	✓ (can set rate)	✓ (can set rate)	✓ (can adjust rate)	✓ (can adjust rate)
Other				
Curriculum Area	Math	Math	General Learning	General Learning
Content	One-to-one correspondence, counting, sorting and patterns	Identify shapes, shape discrimination, create patterns	An activity where students describe and/or classify animals by attributes. Can explore and assess.	Opportunity for exploration and assessment of attributes of size, number, color and movement
Prompt options				
Auditory	✓	✓	✓	✓
Visual				
Multisensory				
Feedback			customizable in Check Work mode	customizable in Check Work mode
Auditory	✓ (can change voice)	✓ (can change voice)	✓ (customizable)	✓ (customizable)
Visual	✓ (customizable)	✓ (customizable)	✓ (customizable)	✓ (customizable)
Multisensory	✓	✓		
Graphics	child	child	generic (can import)	generic (can import)
Record Keeping	Portfolio mgmt, student login, assignments, detail/summary performance assessment.	Portfolio mgmt, student login, assignments, detail/summary performance assessment.	Portfolio mgmt, student login, assignments, detail/summary performance assessment.	Portfolio mgmt, student login, assignments, detail/summary performance assessment.
Can activity be saved or printed?	All records and activities can be saved or printed	All records and activities can be saved or printed	All records and activities can be saved or printed	All records and activities can be saved or printed
Customizing options	Customizable toolbars/quizzes. Can use word banks. Word prediction and interface settings.	Customizable toolbars/quizzes. Can use word banks. Word prediction and interface settings.	Customizable toolbars/quizzes. Can use word banks. Word prediction and interface settings.	Customizable toolbars/quizzes. Can use word banks. Word prediction and interface settings.
Keyboard Shortcuts	<⌘/ctrl + M>: menu, <⌘/ctrl+shift+O>: preferences	<⌘/ctrl + M>: menu, <⌘/ctrl+shift+O>: preferences	<⌘/ctrl + M>: menu, <⌘/ctrl+shift+O>: preferences	<⌘/ctrl + M>: menu, <⌘/ctrl+shift+O>: preferences
Other settings and features	Part of IntelliTools Studio Classroom Suite. Can import graphics, video, audio	Part of IntelliTools Studio Classroom Suite. Can import graphics, video, audio	Part of IntelliTools Studio Classroom Suite. Fully customizable, can import graphics, video, audio	Part of IntelliTools Studio Classroom Suite. Fully customizable, can import graphics, video, audio
Also appropriate at:	Stage 5	Stage 5	Stage 3, 5	Stage 1, 2, 3, 5

Stage Four Software Comparison Chart

Title	IntelliPics Studio III Explore Dinosaurs Activity	IntelliTalk III A Day at the Beach Activity	JumpStart Baby
Publisher	IntelliTools, Inc.	IntelliTools, Inc.	Knowledge Adventure
Platform	Mac, Win	Mac, Win	Mac / Win
Access Options			
Keyboard	✓	✓	✓
Mouse	✓	✓	✓
Touchscreen	✓	✓	✓
IntelliKeys	✓ (overlays available)	✓ (overlays available)	
Switch	✓ (can adjust rate)	✓	✓ (within activity only)
Other			Jump Start bumper ball. Ke:nx setup available.
Curriculum Area	General Learning	General Learning	General Learning
Content	Opportunity for exploration and assessment of attitudes of size, number, color and movement with a set of dinosaurs	Students listen to a story that takes place at the shore and can follow along with the text. Provides opportunities to interact with objects on the screen. .	object permanence, picture and family member recognition, shapes, colors, numbers, nursery rhymes, coloring, and dressing/body parts, some featuring pictures of babies, family, and animations
Prompt options			
Auditory	✓	✓	
Visual			
Multisensory			✓
Feedback	customizable in Check Work mode	customizable in Check Work mode	
Auditory	✓ (customizable)	✓ (customizable)	
Visual	✓ (customizable)	✓ (customizable)	
Multisensory		✓	✓
Graphics	generic (can import)	child	child
Record Keeping	Portfolio mgmt, student login, assignments, detail/summary performance assessment.	Portfolio mgmt, student login, assignments, detail/summary performance assessment.	baby book
Can activity be saved or printed?	All records and activities can be saved or printed	All records and activities can be saved or printed	none
Customizing options	Customizable toolbars/quizzes. Can use word banks. Word prediction and interface settings.	Customizable toolbars/quizzes. Can use word banks. Word prediction and interface settings.	add your own pictures, videos, record your own messages to the activities
Keyboard Shortcuts	<⌘/ctrl + M>: menu, <⌘/ctrl+shift+O>: preferences	<⌘/ctrl + M>: menu, <⌘/ctrl+shift+O>: preferences	
Other settings and features	Part of IntelliTools Studio Classroom Suite. Fully customizable, can import graphics, video, audio	Can record own voices telling the story, develop oral reading skills	Can create a customized baby book with own photos; Connect and Play option allows baby to play with a remote relative or friend over the Internet
Also appropriate at:	Stage 1, 2, 3, 5	Stage 5	Stage 1, Stage 2, Stage 3



Stage Four Software Comparison Chart

Title	JumpStart Kindergarten	JumpStart Preschool	KidBook
Publisher	Knowledge Adventure	Knowledge Adventure	Switch In Time
Platform	Mac / Win	Mac / Win	Mac
Access Options			
Keyboard	√	√	√
Mouse	√	√	√
Touchscreen	√	√	
IntelliKeys			
Switch			√ (can set rate, cycles)
Other			
Curriculum Area	General Learning	General Learning	General Learning
Content	reading and math readiness, language and creative arts; alphabet, letter combinations, counting, quantities, similarities and differences, sequencing, time concepts, colors and shapes	reading and math readiness, language and creative arts; spatial relations, colors, shapes, numbers and counting, phonics and letter sounds, the alphabet, listening skills, similarities and differences and music	create electronic talking books: type or paste in text, add graphics
Prompt options			symbol menu
Auditory	√	√	
Visual			
Multisensory			
Feedback			choose voice, rate, volume; reads by word or sentence
Auditory			√ (optional speech)
Visual			
Multisensory	√	√	
Graphics	child	child	generic: picture library, can also import graphics
Record Keeping	advancement is tracked in a printable progress report for 1-99 learners; keeps subject-specific graphs of progress	advancement is tracked in a printable progress report that gives immediate feedback on how learner is doing in each fundamental concept	
Can activity be saved or printed?	can print progress reports and workbook activity pages	can print progress reports and workbook activity pages	can save books
Customizing options	toolbar has Level bars to adjust the learning level in each game	toolbar has Level bars to adjust the learning level in each game	auto/manual options
Keyboard Shortcuts			⌘R: read, ⌘T: type/speak
Other settings and features	Assessment test and workbook of printable exercises. Helps evaluate child's progress	Assessment test and workbook of printable exercises. Helps evaluate child's progress	reads-scans multiple text boxes, pause/stop reading with click, text and background color options, large text, and use text to speech with moving highlighting
Also appropriate at:			Stage 5, Stage 7

Stage Four Software Comparison Chart

Title	KidPix Studio Deluxe	Learn More About Math	Learning about the Time of Day†	Learning to Read Clocks†
Publisher	Broderbund Software	Inclusive Technology Ltd.	IntelliTools, Inc.	IntelliTools, Inc.
Platform	Mac / Win	Win	Mac	Mac
Access Options				
Keyboard		√ (space, enter)		
Mouse	√	√	√	√
Touchscreen	√	√	√	√
IntelliKeys		√	√ (overlays included)	√ (overlays included)
Switch		√ (options avail.)		
Other	setups for Ke:nx and Ke:nx On:Board available			
Curriculum Area	General Learning	Math Readiness	General Learning	General Learning
Content	learners create their own content	counting, number matching, addition, subtraction	activities for learning about a.m. and p.m., digital and analog clocks, and estimating time of day for real-life activities	learner explores clocks or takes a quiz
Prompt options				
Auditory			√	√
Visual		√	√	√
Multisensory				
Feedback	can choose voice, read text aloud, Spanish		correct answer shown after 4 incorrect	correct answer shown after 4 incorrect
Auditory	√ (tool sounds optional)	√ (optional)	√ (increasing specificity)	√ (increasing specificity)
Visual	√	√	√	√
Multisensory	√	√		
Graphics	generic	drawings (child/teen)	child and teen/adult	child and teen/adult
Record Keeping				
Can activity be saved or printed?	Learner's work can be saved and printed	save user settings	print follow-up activity sheet and save custom quizzes	print follow-up activity sheet and save custom quizzes
Customizing options	small kids mode: menu protection	difficulty level, font, lower/uppercase letters,		two levels of difficulty
Keyboard Shortcuts				
Other settings and features	slide show feature, extensive collection of clipart, backgrounds, maps, can import own graphics, picture menus		manual contains suggestions for further use.	manual contains suggestions for further use.
Also appropriate at:	Stage 5, Stage 7	Stage 5(Plus and Minus, Words and Pictures, Crossword), Stage 6 (Time)	Stage 6	Stage 6

Stage Four Software Comparison Chart

Title	Making Sense with Numbers	McGee, McGee at the Fun Fair	Micro-LADS: 1-7	Millie's Math House
Publisher	Inclusive Technology Ltd.	Lawrence Productions, Inc.	Laureate Learning Systems	Riverdeep
Platform	Win	Mac, Win diskette	Mac / Win	Mac / Win
Access Options				
Keyboard	√ (space, enter)		√	√
Mouse	√ (pointer customizable)	√	√	√
Touchscreen	√	√	√	√
IntelliKeys	√			√ (overlays available)
Switch	√ (auto, step)		√ (auto, step)	√ (auto, can set rate)
Other				
Curriculum Area	Math Readiness	General Learning	General Learning	Math Readiness
Content	numbers 1 to 9: exploring, counting, number identification, number sequencing, memory, matching	make stories and explore scenes by clicking on objects	early syntax and basic grammatical constructions, vocabulary and sentence structure	shapes, numbers, counting, patterns, comparisons
Prompt options				
Auditory			√ (with text cues)	√ (with visual cues)
Visual	√			
Multisensory				
Feedback	Advances after correct answer only		correct answer flashes after 1 incorrect, shown after 2 incorrect	incorrect responses gradually eliminated
Auditory	√ (optional)		√	
Visual	√		√	
Multisensory	√	√	√	√ (music optional)
Graphics	drawings (child)	child	generic	child
Record Keeping	save settings		learner name, activity, time, topic, number and % correct	date, activity, total responses, correct responses, time spent
Can activity be saved or printed?	print screen	none	can print report	can print report and designs and save learner data
Customizing options	difficulty level, sound, can be set to automatically progress to next activity	sound volume has 3 settings	show/hide menus and mouse cursor	can specify how long the computer times and records play
Keyboard Shortcuts			<esc>: exit, <⌘/ctrl+H>: hide cursor, <⌘/ctrl+space>: menu, <⌘/ctrl+P>: pause	<⌘/ctrl+option+A>: adult/instructor area
Other settings and features	dot-to-dot activities, dominoes, paint-by-numbers			Classroom and home activities; learning goals; thorough documentation. Formerly published by Edmark.
Also appropriate at:		Stage 3	Stage 2, Stage 3, Stage 5, Stage 7	Stage 3

Stage Four Software Comparison Chart

Title	Mix 'n Match	Monkeys Jumping on the Bed	My Own Bookshelf	New Katie's Farm*
Publisher	Marblesoft	SoftTouch, Inc.	SoftTouch, Inc.	Lawrence Productions, Inc.
Platform	Mac diskette or CD*	Mac / Win	Mac / Win	Mac / Win
Access Options				
Keyboard	✓		✓	
Mouse	✓	✓	✓	✓
Touchscreen	✓	✓	✓	✓
IntelliKeys	✓ (overlays included)	✓ (overlays available)	✓	
Switch	✓ (auto, with options)	✓ (auto)	✓ (auto, step)	
Other	Ke:nx On:Board (setup av.), Big Keys, PowerPad	Ke:nx (setup avail.)		
Curriculum Area	General Learning	Math Readiness	Reading	General Learning
Content	matching, sorting and patterning activities with colors and shapes	exploration, identification, and matching	Select books from bookshelf and read them independently,	explore and learn facts about farm animals, beginning problem solving (choose correct animal food), imaginary play with farm animals
Prompt options	sound, speech, written, repeat			
Auditory	✓ (with text cues)	✓ (with visual cues)		✓
Visual			✓	
Multisensory				
Feedback	can choose "Don't say no" to incorrect responses	advances after correct answer only (others inactive)	Learner is rewarded with the next page being shown and read.	unlimited responses allowed
Auditory	✓ for incorrect answers			✓ (reward)
Visual	✓ with options			
Multisensory	✓ with options	✓	✓	
Graphics	teen/adult	child	child	child
Record Keeping	learner name, level of difficulty, problems completed, number correct and incorrect		records student preferences, collects data for accountability records	
Can activity be saved or printed?	can save student data and preferences and print report	none	saves and prints books for use off the computer	can print paper dolls and clothing
Customizing options	can adjust prompt frequency, highlight, background, font, can hide/show menus and mouse cursor	can change number of answer choices		
Keyboard Shortcuts	⌘I: input, ⌘L: levels, <esc>: exit lesson, ⌘D: define lesson	hold down option key to return to menu	<M>ain menu, <O>ptions, <S>ound on/off, <P>revious screen	
Other settings and features	custom feedback allows activity to be used with any age; choose level, rate of advancement; *part of Early Learning Suite		Import and export books	*part of the "No Words" series
Also appropriate at:	Stage 5	Stage 3	Stage 5	Stage 3

Stage Four Software Comparison Chart

Title	PixWriter	Simon Sounds It Out	Spider in the Kitchen
Publisher	Slater Software	Don Johnston, Inc.	Inclusive Technology Ltd.
Platform	Mac, Win	Mac	Mac / Win
Access Options			
Keyboard	✓		✓
Mouse	✓	✓	✓
Touchscreen	✓	✓	✓
IntelliKeys	✓		✓ (overlays included)
Switch	✓	✓ (auto)	✓ (auto)
Other		Ke:nx setup avail., Discover:Switch	
Curriculum Area	Reading Readiness	Reading Readiness	General Learning
Content	talking word processor combining print, graphics and speech feedback	timed lessons include beginning and ending sounds, spelling and reading	sequencing activities, positional concepts, functional concepts
Prompt options			
Auditory		✓ (with visual cues)	✓
Visual			✓
Multisensory			✓
Feedback	can choose voice, rate	incorrect: tutor helps learner choose correct answer by showing it in dimmed font	
Auditory	✓ (letter, word, all)		✓
Visual	✓		✓
Multisensory	✓	✓	✓
Graphics	generic, can import own	child	drawings (child)
Record Keeping		Progress, number of questions answered correctly, number of sounds learned	
Can activity be saved or printed?	Learner's work can be saved and printed	can print review worksheets and save options	
Customizing options	button setup option to create word bank; can enter pronunciation exceptions	can set difficulty level, disable sound and typing and adjust scanning speed	speech, sound effects, highlights, repeat rate, feedback, can adjust number of times concepts are presented to student
Keyboard Shortcuts	onscreen menu	⌘T for teacher options from the sign-in screen	
Other settings and features	customizable symbol menu; spell checker includes pictures and words		
Also appropriate at:	Stage 5, Stage 7		5(problem solving), 6(functional content)

# Stage Four Software Comparison Chart

Title	Stickybear's Early Learning Activities	Storytime Just for Fun!	Storytime Songbook 1 & 2
Publisher	Optimum Resource, Inc.	Creative Communicating	Creative Communicating
Platform	Mac / Win	Mac / Win	Mac / Win
Access Options			
Keyboard			
Mouse	✓	✓	✓
Touchscreen	✓	✓	✓
IntelliKeys		✓ (overlays included)	✓ (overlays included)
Switch		✓ (auto, step)	✓ (auto)
Other			
Curriculum Area	General Learning	Play Activities	Play Activities
Content	color, shapes, grouping, opposites, letters, numbers; free exploration/assessment sections for each activity	five stories are read aloud	Learner can select an item. The program plays a short song about the item with highlighted text.
Prompt options			
Auditory	✓ (with text cues)		✓
Visual			
Multisensory			
Feedback	incorrect answer removed and correct answer reinforced verbally		
Auditory	✓		
Visual	✓		
Multisensory	✓	✓	✓
Graphics	child	child	child
Record Keeping			
Can activity be saved or printed?		can print display and mini-books	
Customizing options	sound effects on/off, speech on/off, free play vs. structured	can edit picture items, change voice, and import sounds using IntelliPics	
Keyboard Shortcuts	<⌘/ctrl>+H for help		
Other settings and features	Spanish language option		story retelling overlays, can print mini-books; activity suggestions
Also appropriate at:		Stage 3, Stage 5	Stage 1, Stage 2, Stage 3

Stage Four Software Comparison Chart

Title	SuperSwitch Ensemble	Switch Art	SwitchIt! Early Math with Spider and Friends
Publisher	Switch In Time	Judy Lynn Software, Inc.	IntelliTools, Inc.
Platform	Mac	DOS / Win CD or diskette	Mac / Win
Access Options			
Keyboard	✓	✓	✓
Mouse	✓	✓	✓
Touchscreen			✓
IntelliKeys	✓ (overlays included)	✓	✓ (overlays included)
Switch	✓ (can set sensitivity)	✓ (auto)	✓ (auto, step can set rate)
Other	Ke:nx, Discover:Switch		
Curriculum Area	Play Activities	Play Activities	Math Readiness
Content	tonebells, play chords, jam, conduct, sing, improvise, 100+ tunes	onscreen coloring book; switch or key press applies color	7 activities; copying and repeating patterns, drawing, sorting, counting, matching shapes, pictures, numbers, dice
Prompt options			
Auditory			
Visual	✓	✓	✓
Multisensory			
Feedback			ignores incorrect responses
Auditory			sound on/off
Visual			
Multisensory	✓		✓
Graphics	generic	generic	generic
Record Keeping			
Can activity be saved or printed?	can save activity settings		
Customizing options	can add own recordings or imported sounds to songs	can adjust speed of crayon and whether one or two switch presses are required to apply color	on/off for speech, sound and highlight, choose arrow color and activity options including timing and levels
Keyboard Shortcuts		<esc> key to quit	<shift>+<ctrl-P> to pause, menu to quit
Other settings and features	scanning feedback, settings for volume/microphone, switch/key settings		option to auto load IntelliKeys overlays
Also appropriate at:	Stage 3	Stage 3	Stage 3, Stage 5

Stage Four Software Comparison Chart

Title	Teach Me Phonemics	The Magic Letter Factory	This Old Man
Publisher	SoftTouch, Inc.	Educational Activities, Inc.	UCLA Intervention Program
Platform	Mac / Win	Mac / Win	Mac diskette
Access Options			
Keyboard	✓	✓	✓ (space)
Mouse	✓	✓	✓
Touchscreen	✓	✓	✓
IntelliKeys	✓ (overlays included)		✓
Switch	✓ (auto, step)		✓ (auto)
Other			microphone required if recording prompts
Curriculum Area	Reading Readiness	Reading Readiness	Math Readiness
Content	teaches 600 nouns divided into libraries by phoneme, word, onset/rhyme activity options	alphabet song/video, letter ID, sound symbol, build 3-letter words and 3-word sentences	2 explore and 3 assess activities for number identification, counting, and sequencing
Prompt options			
Auditory			✓
Visual			
Multisensory		✓	
Feedback	auditory features male, female choice	built-in wait time, incorrect response generates gentle "try again," then cues	Correct answer given after several incorrect responses. Counting aloud, video, animation optional.
Auditory	✓		
Visual	✓		
Multisensory	✓	✓	✓ ("Try Again" plus repeat question)
Graphics	generic; photos morph to Mayer-Johnson symbols	child (realistic)	child
Record Keeping			
Can activity be saved or printed?			can save preferences
Customizing options	on/off option for music, movement, morphing, and 4-9 object choices, choice of phoneme and word, word alone, or onset and rime		can set sign language interpreter to prompt learner by full name or first letter.
Keyboard Shortcuts	T for preferences, <ctrl> key to go back	Onscreen activity and exit buttons.	<esc> key to end activity and return to menu; ⌘G to begin activity
Other settings and features	four separate titles in series: Initial, Medial, Final, Blends	Directions are clearly modeled and well-paced.	song accompanied by sign language video as an option
Also appropriate at:	Stage 3, Stage 5		Stage 2 (Level #1; spacebar only)



## Stage Four Software Comparison Chart

<b>Title</b>	<b>Writing with Symbols 2000</b>
<b>Publisher</b>	Mayer-Johnson Corporation
<b>Platform</b>	Win
<b>Access Options</b>	
<b>Keyboard</b>	✓
<b>Mouse</b>	✓
<b>Touchscreen</b>	✓
<b>IntelliKeys</b>	
<b>Switch</b>	
<b>Other</b>	
<b>Curriculum Area</b>	Reading Readiness
<b>Content</b>	word processor using symbols (color Mayer-Johnson symbols, black and white, rebus) and text
<b>Prompt options</b>	
<b>Auditory</b>	✓
<b>Visual</b>	✓
<b>Multisensory</b>	
<b>Feedback</b>	
<b>Auditory</b>	
<b>Visual</b>	
<b>Multisensory</b>	
<b>Graphics</b>	child (can import)
<b>Record Keeping</b>	responses to activities are saved with the activity
<b>Can activity be saved or printed?</b>	can print activities and save windows
<b>Customizing options</b>	can change sizes, colors, styles of symbols and text; customize toolbars; create macros
<b>Keyboard Shortcuts</b>	<alt-F4> to quit program; F10 to type in text-only mode
<b>Other settings and features</b>	spell checker with graphics built in
<b>Also appropriate at:</b>	Stage 5, Stage 7

†Titles with this symbol are no longer available from the manufacturers. Information is provided for those who already own them. They may still be found in some school libraries.

### Additional Titles Appropriate for Stage Four:

2+2  
 Addition (IntelliMathics III Template)  
 Addition in the Desert (IntelliMathics III Activity)  
 Animals in the Forest  
 Balanced Literacy  
 Blocks in Motion  
 Cause and Effect Cinema  
 Chooselt! Maker  
 Cinema II-Life Skills  
 Circletime Tales® Deluxe  
 Concepts On the Move: Advanced Preacademics  
 Concepts On the Move: Basic Preacademics  
 Discrete Trial Trainer  
 Early Childhood Fun: Arump  
 Early Childhood Fun: Single Switch  
 Early Learning Volume II & III  
 Edmark Reading Program  
 Fall Fun  
 Find What's Needed (Independent Living Activities)  
 Hands-On Concepts: Five Cuddly Teddies  
 Hands-On Concepts: Old MacDonald's Farm  
 Hands-On Concepts: The Little Dough Man  
 Independent Living Activities: Dial the Phone  
 Independent Living Activities: Dress  
 Independent Living Activities: Identify Sounds  
 IntelliMathics III  
 IntelliPics Studio Easy Paint Underwater, Easy Paint Template  
 IntelliPics Studio III  
 IntelliPics Studio III: Coloring Book Activity  
 IntelliPics Studio III: Coloring Book Template  
 IntelliPics Studio III: Coloring Diagrams Template  
 Learn More Through Games  
 Let's Grow Wild  
 Listen With Your Ears  
 Match It  
 Mega Mix  
 Mighty Math Carnival Countdown  
 Nouns and Sounds  
 Old MacDonald's Farm Deluxe  
 Older Students CD  
 One Switch Picasso 1, 2  
 Puzzle Arch, Puzzle Soccer, Puzzle Template  
 Puzzle Power™, Puzzle Power Zoo, Puzzle Power School Days  
 Read Community Signs (Independent Living Activities)  
 Sanford's Social Skills  
 Scan and Paint  
 Scanning Picasso 1, 2  
 Single Switch Games  
 SoftTouch Classics 1: Five Frogs Plus  
 Songs I Sing at Preschool  
 Spell-A-Word  
 Switch Puzzles  
 TalkTime with Tucker  
 Teddy Games  
 The Deciders Take on Concepts: Mission I and II  
 Thinkin' Things Collection I, II, III  
 Touch!  
 True Friends  
 Turn-Talking  
 Type and Talk 4.0  
 UKanDu Interactive Series: Camp Frog  
 Hollow, KC & Clyde in Fly Ball  
 UKanDu Little Books: A Day at Play, On a Green Bus, Out and About  
 UKanDu Switches, Tool Series: Eensy & Friends, Forgetful & Friends, Humpty Dumpty & Friends  
 US Puzzles Template (IntelliTools Classroom Suite)  
 Wheels on the Bus  
 Wheels!  
 WordMaker

